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THE

BOKHARA VICTIMS.

103268

BY

CAPTAIN GROVER, Unatt., F.R.S.

" Quid verum atque decens curo et rogo, et omnis in hoc sum."—Hor.

LONDON:

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MDCCCXLV.

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TO

HER MOST GRACIOUS MAJESTY,

THE QUEEN.

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR MAJESTY!

MY object in presuming to dedicate the following Narrative to your Majesty, is the hope of directing your Majesty's attention to the cruel sufferings and alleged murder of two British officers, who were sent on an important diplomatic mission, on your Majesty's service, and who appear to have been abandoned in an unaccountable manner, by your Majesty's Government.

I consider it my duty to state to your Majesty, that the circumstances attending

this extraordinary case are degrading to the British nation, and are of a nature to dim the lustre of your Majesty's crown.

I consider it my duty also to add, that Lieutenant-Colonel Stoddart and Captain Conolly are not the only officers who have been sent on diplomatic missions to Central Asia, and then abandoned.

Trusting the peculiar circumstances of this cruel case will be deemed a sufficient apology for my boldness in presuming to dedicate this narrative to your Majesty,

I have the honour to subscribe myself,
Your Majesty's faithful
And devoted Subject,
JOHN GROVER,
Captain Unattached.

London, April, 1845.

PREFACE.

In the month of July, 1843, I published an "Appeal to the British Nation" on behalf of my friend Lieutenant-Colonel Stoddart, and Captain Conolly, British Officers, who were imprisoned by the Ameer of Bokhara while employed in the service of their country on a diplomatic mission. I then stated that these officers had been abandoned to their wretched fate by the British Government, "which had not even taken the trouble to ascertain the simple fact of their existence."

Now, after a lapse of nearly two years, and having collected information from every accessible source, I openly and publicly repeat to the world that assertion; and I am quite sure, that any one

who will take the trouble of perusing the following narrative, will be satisfied that no other inference can be drawn from the facts which I now consider it my duty to lay before the public.

The circumstances connected with Colonel Stoddart's *first* imprisonment in the *dark well* are now, for the first time, made known.

In the present publication I have repeated some of the statements which I made in my "Appeal to the British Nation:" this was necessary to connect the different parts of the narrative. It would have been useless to refer to that work which I withdrew from circulation for reasons which will appear in the present publication.

Whenever, in the present work, I have quoted the Parliamentary Debates, it has always been from *Hansard.* I have copied the debate *verbatim*, marking, however, by *italics*, those passages to which I was desirous of directing the reader's particular attention.

I must express my grateful thanks to the press,

not only of this country, but of the Continent of Europe, and of Asia, for the assistance afforded the Committee.

That Dr. Wolff's generous self-devotion has not produced the effect we wished, we can only express a regret. In this world we cannot command success—we can only endeavour to deserve it.

Since Dr. Wolff's departure the Committee have been most anxious about him, and have had forty-six meetings.

Within a few days of the publication of this trifling work Dr. Wolff will be among us; and I hope to see that his generous self-devotion will be properly appreciated by the British Nation.

I trust the critic will bear in mind that this is the plain, unvarnished statement of a mere soldier, who, at the age of fifteen, was serving his country, and was occupied in camps and garrisons during that period, which most men have the good fortune to be able to devote to study.

CHAPTER I.

Lieutenant Stoddart — Staff Corps — Placed on Half-Pay — Secretary of the United Service Institution — Goes to Persia as Military Secretary — Siege of Herat — Obtains the Brevet Rank of Major — Sent on a Mission to Bokhara — Object of the Mission — Reception at Bokhara — Mahsum Berde Reiss — Stoddart sees the Ameer — Refuses to dismount from his Horse — First Interview with the King of Bokhara — Second Interview with the Reiss — The Reiss threatens to stab Stoddart — Stoddart's Coolness and Presence of Mind — Is taken through the Streets bound with Cords — An Interview with a Mysterious Personage — Stoddart's Mistake — Cast into the dark Well — His Companions in the Well — Forced to renounce his Religion — Released from the Well — Stoddart's Letter to an American Missionary — Avows his return to Christianity — Twice again Imprisoned — Supposed Cause of these Imprisonments — The King's Chief Cook — Subjected to cruel Insults — Nearly Starved to Death — Kindness of the King's Physician — Removed to the House of the Nayib — A Letter from Colonel Stoddart — Remarks on the Letter — Conduct of the British Government — Comments — Indecent Haste in striking Stoddart's Name out of the Army List — Ignorance of Geography — Bokhara not in Persia — Army List — Correspondence with the War Office — Blunder corrected in the Annual Army List.

1624

CHAPTER I.

In the year 1833, Charles Stoddart, a lieutenant in the Staff Corps, was, by reduction, placed on half-pay, but with the rank of captain. At that time, the post of secretary to the United Service Institution was vacant, and among one hundred and fifty candidates Captain Stoddart was chosen. Being on the council, I became acquainted with him, and was fortunately the means of removing from him an imputation which affected his honour: this, Captain Stoddart often referred to with grateful feelings.

In the year 1835, the government resolved to dispatch Mr. Ellis on a mission to Persia, and it was proposed to Captain Stoddart to be attached to that mission as military secretary. He consulted me on the occasion, and, by my advice, he accepted the proposition.

When Mr. Ellis left Persia, Captain Stoddart was sent to Herat, to endeavour to induce the

Persians to raise the siege of that place; and for his conduct on that occasion he obtained the brevet rank of major, and local rank of lieutenant-colonel. He, however, only received the intelligence of this promotion in June 1841, while a captive at Bokhara.

Had Captain Stoddart consulted me about his mission to Bokhara, I should have dissuaded him from it. Stoddart was a mere soldier, a man of the greatest bravery and determination, with a delicate sense of a soldier's honour; but he was a man of impulse, with no more power of self-control than an infant. To attack or defend a fortress, no better man than Captain Stoddart could have been found; but for a diplomatic mission, requiring coolness and self-command, a man less adapted to the purpose could not readily have been met with.

Having succeeded in his mission to Herat, he returned to Teheran.

In the year 1838, Sir John M'Neill, Her Majesty's ambassador at the court of Persia, gave Colonel Stoddart 1000 ducats, and dispatched him on a diplomatic mission to Bokhara. He was ordered to proceed first to Meimanah, and to endeavour to induce the chief of that place to abandon the system of pillage that was devastating the north-west frontier of Persia, and, above all things,

he was instructed to endeavour to put a stop to the capture of slaves. At Bokhara he was directed to use his best efforts to obtain the liberty of any Russian prisoners he might find there, and he was to conclude a friendly treaty with the Ameer or King of that country. Such were Colonel Stoddart's official instructions.

At Meimanah he had but indifferent success, and he reached Bokhara two days before the festival of Ramazan. At the gate of the city he was received with great distinction by a Mihmandah, and was escorted by a troop of cavalry to a house that was assigned to him as a residence, and which was very near the one occupied by the Vizier, Mahsum Berde Reiss.

Immediately on his arrival, Colonel Stoddart thought it his duty to wait upon the Vizier, to deliver the letters he had brought from Sir John M'Neill, which, unfortunately, were addressed to the Goosh Begee, the late Vizier, the news of whose disgrace and imprisonment had not reached Persia when Colonel Stoddart left that country.

The Reiss appeared to be excessively mortified that the letters should have been addressed to his predecessor, and treated Colonel Stoddart with great rudeness. The next day he sent for the

colonel, but, as the Vizier had not returned his visit, he sent for answer that he should not attend. The moment this message was communicated to Mahsum Berde, he hastened to Colonel Stoddart's residence, and now his manner was most violent. His first words were, "Do you know that I have destroyed all the Ameer's enemies?" meaning to insinuate that the same fate might await Colonel Stoddart should he become suspected. Colonel Stoddart replied, that he was extremely glad to hear that the Ameer had no longer any enemies.

The following day, that is the first day of Ramazan, the Mihmandah informed Colonel Stoddart that the Ameer* was desirous of seeing him, and that he was to proceed on foot to the public square, Registan, there to await the Ameer's message. This, Colonel Stoddart positively refused to do, stating that he never rendered such a mark of respect to his own sovereign, and that if he happened to go on horseback to the Registan, nothing but force should make him dismount. This being reported

* The Ameer of Bokhara is named Nasr-Ullah-Bahadur Khan Melik-el-Mumenin. He was the second son of the Ameer Seid, and reached the throne by a series of crimes which it is foreign to my purpose to relate, but which the reader will find related in Baron de Bode's translation of a Russian work just published.

to the Reiss, permission was sent for Colonel Stoddart to go on horseback. He therefore went to the public square, dressed in full uniform, accompanied by a few attendants, and the whole population were astonished at seeing him enter the Registan on horseback, and at his extreme audacity in not dismounting.

The Ameer, on his return from the Grand Mesjid, traversed the public square, and perceived Colonel Stoddart, who remained on horseback, and gave a military salute. The Ameer looked at him fixedly for some time, and then passed on without saying a word. On his return to the palace, he sent a maharam (chamberlain) to the Colonel, to ask why he had not dismounted. Colonel Stoddart answered, that it was not the custom in England, and that he could not do otherwise. The Ameer then sent to him to say, that he was perfectly satisfied with his conduct; and invited him immediately to come to the palace. On his arrival, they conducted him to the corridor which leads to the court where the Ameer receives petitions, named Arezahnah. While he was waiting to be introduced, a mahram approached, and asked if he was desirous that he should take his *servile* supplications (*arzee bendaghanee*) to the Ameer. Colonel Stoddart, offended by that expression, replied,

"That he was no man's slave, and that his *servile* supplications could be addressed to God alone; and, that what he had to communicate to the Ameer, he would say to him when admitted to his presence, and not till then." Shortly afterwards, the master of the ceremonies came to present him. Now the Oozbeg etiquette requires, that a person on being presented, should be supported by two attendants on entering the presence-chamber, who place their hands under his armpits. They were proceeding in the usual manner, when Colonel Stoddart, ignorant of the customs of the country, imagined that they were about to adopt the method formerly employed on similar occasions at Constantinople; *i. e.*, to make him advance rapidly forward, and then suddenly to prostrate him at the sovereign's feet. Not being disposed to submit to this humiliating ceremony, he shook off these attendants. The master of the ceremonies now approached; and fearing that Colonel Stoddart's violence might indicate some hostile intention toward the Ameer, he thought it his duty to feel the Colonel's clothes, to discover if he had any concealed arms, but his zeal was rewarded by a blow, which laid him prostrate; and Colonel Stoddart entered alone into the royal presence-chamber. Here his ignorance of Oozbeg customs produced another blunder. A crier is placed

at the door of the Ameer's hall of audience; and when any one is introduced, he calls out with a loud voice, that all present should pray for the happiness of the king. The Colonel, thinking that this request was addressed to him personally, gravely placed his two hands before him, and commenced in the most solemn manner an extempore prayer in Persian. This scene must have appeared most extraordinary to the Ameer, he, however, kept his countenance; and, having patiently listened to the end, he pronounced the usual *Allahoo Akber*, and stroked his beard. He then received from Colonel Stoddart the letter of which he was the bearer, and asked if he had any verbal communication to make. The Colonel replied that he had; and, that when requested he would communicate it. He returned home perfectly satisfied with his reception.

In the evening of the second day of Ramazan, *i. e.*, on the fourth day after his arrival, his Mehmandah came to invite him to attend the Reiss, to receive some orders from the Ameer. He wished to put on his uniform, but the Mehmandah told him such ceremony was quite unnecessary; that he might present himself exactly as he was; that the least delay would irritate the Reiss, who was on the point of starting to a frontier town, named

Kagathan, to inspect a caravan just arrived from Russia; and that, in fact, not a moment was to be lost. Colonel Stoddart, therefore, proceeded at once, dressed as he was; and on entering the court which precedes the reception-room, he was startled at seeing twelve suspicious-looking persons. His surprise soon gave way to other feelings, when he was suddenly seized behind, thrown to the ground; and his body was so bound with cords, that he was deprived of all motion. Shortly afterwards, the door of the saloon opened, and the Reiss himself appeared, armed with a long knife. Colonel Stoddart now thinking his last hour was come, said in Persian, "May God forgive you your sins!" and patiently waited the result. The Reiss approached him with a furious countenance, placed the point of the knife to his breast, and looked at him fixedly for some time; perceiving that he did not move, he began to revile him, calling him spy, a man who had come from the English to buy Bokhara, as they had Caubul, with other abusive expressions. He again threatened to kill him; and having several times raised his knife as if to destroy him, he suddenly ordered the people to take him away, and departed. Colonel Stoddart was now carried out into the street. The rain fell in torrents: the silence of his bearers, their horrid countenances, as

seen by the light of the torches they carried, so completely struck him with terror, that he entreated these people to destroy him at once, rather than prolong his sufferings by thus dragging him about from place to place. He was then placed upon the ground; and one of his attendants said to him, laughing, that "he certainly must be a sorcerer, and aware that he was not to be put to death; for that it was impossible that any human being could face death with such calm indifference." This remark consoled him a little, and gave him courage. He was taken up again, and carried a short distance; and now his terror was redoubled, for he was led into a dark room, the door of which was immediately bolted, and he was laid upon a damp plank or board, still bound with cords, so that he could not move his limbs. In this horrid state of anxiety and suspense, he remained, as he imagines, about two hours, when he heard the door unbolted. A man entered, preceded by attendants, who carried candles. This person was so completely muffled up, that nothing but his eyes could be seen, which seemed to flash fire. He took a seat on a raised part of the room, and the candles were placed before him. Colonel Stoddart observed him narrowly, and thought it might possibly be the Ameer himself, who had assumed this dis-

guise: the very respectful demeanour of the attendants confirmed this idea; and he, therefore, thought it his duty to address him: told him he prayed the Almighty would forgive him; that he had done wrong to imprison an innocent man, who had come to his state on a mission from the British Government, with friendly intentions; that had he not been disposed to receive him, he should have notified his pleasure to the Vizier before he was allowed to enter the city; that if he disliked his prolonged residence in his capital, he had only to order him to leave. The unknown listened with silent attention to Colonel Stoddart's speech, and then arose, saying, he would communicate all he had said to the Ameer. Colonel Stoddart then discovered that this man was the chief of the police.)

That night he was carried to a subterraneous dungeon, which, in fact, was nothing but a well, twenty-one feet deep, the only means of descent to which was by a rope, by which, also, food was conveyed to the prisoners. Here he found three men, companions of his misery, two thieves and a murderer. He was confined two months in that well. He soon made friends with his wretched companions, one of whom had been several years in that dreadful place; and having contrived to get some tobacco,

they passed their time smoking. The second day of his imprisonment, the executioner descended the well with an order from the Ameer instantly to kill him if he did not embrace Islamism. Colonel Stoddart, his body and mind weakened by the horrid sufferings to which they had been submitted, to save himself from certain destruction, made the required profession of faith. This, however, did not ameliorate his position although it saved his life.*

"Ahi dura terra, perchè non t'apristi?"

This horrid dungeon, in which he was confined,

* My friend, Colonel Stoddart, was a really sincere and devout Christian. A work has recently been published in the United States, entitled "A Residence of Eight Years in Persia among the Nestorian Christians," by the Rev. Justin Perkins, which will bear out my assertion. In this interesting work I find two notices of my friend. The first, at page 402, is as follows:—

"The following note was brought to me to-day, January 1st, by a Koordish chief, who received it under the walls of Herat about fifteen months ago. To make it as secure as possible, the Koord ripped open the skirt of his garment, placed it between the folds, and again stitched them together. On reaching his home, about a thousand miles from Herat, he remembered that he had taken a note in charge for me, but had forgotten what disposal he made of it. A year afterwards, it occurred to him that he had enclosed it within the skirt of his garment, and he lost no time in coming a day's journey from the mountains back of Oroomiah on purpose to bring it. This was

swarmed with innumerable ticks, and every disgusting species of vermin, which are especially reared

faithful for a Koord. The note was almost worn out, in common with the garment itself, but the writing was still legible. It was as follows:—

"'My dear friend,—By Ismael Aga, a worthy Koordish friend of mine, I send a few lines to express the interest I take in your undertaking at Oroomiah, in planting the principles of the Gospel. May the Almighty bless you in this His special service! I received here a very interesting account of your proceedings, and of the respect with which you are held, to the glory of Christ's name, and your own eternal profit, from Ibrahim Khaleel Khan Affshar, also one of your well-wishers. Remember me kindly to your circle, and ever believe me, not only for the sake of your work and yourself, but for the sake of the friends I have in your land,

"'Yours sincerely,

"'CHARLES STODDART.

"'*Royal Camp, near Herat,*

"'*8th Sept.* 1838.

"'P.S. To-morrow, the Shah leaves this with his forces, at British recommendation; and peace is restored to this unhappy neighbourhood and city. Thanks to God. C. S.'

"The writer of the above is Lieut.-Colonel Stoddart, the officer sent by the ambassador to announce to the king the demand of the English government, that his Persian Majesty should raise the siege of Herat."

At page 507, I find the following:—

"It is a most interesting circumstance, that among the English who are scattered through the East, there is a large number

to annoy the wretched prisoners; and should this prison, by any extraordinary chance, be without an inmate, that the vermin might not perish, they are supplied with rations of raw meat.

Many of the indignities my unfortunate friend was subjected to in this wretched prison were of

of devotedly pious men; and among them, many military and civil officers of high standing, who are not ashamed to be known as the humble servants of God, as well as the faithful servants of their country. A late British envoy to the court of Herat, in East Persia, was Colonel Todd, who was previously some time in Persia. He is a devout Christian, and has repeatedly cheered us with his counsels and letters. Colonel Stoddart, another pious officer, was envoy to the yet more distant court of Bokhara, which is one of the strongest holds of the religion of the false prophet, and one of the most inaccessible points, and least known to Europeans, in all Central Asia. Mahommedan bigotry, on his first arrival there, cast him into prison; and, as it is reported, submitted to him the fearful alternative of conversion to that bloody faith or a violent death. He, however, who shut the lions' mouths, that they should not harm Daniel in their den, preserved this His servant, also, unharmed amid the perils of his distant and gloomy confinement; and, under the pressure of his own trials, Colonel Stoddart forgot not us and our labours in Persia, but still cheered us with fraternal epistles.

"Need I say, that such English officers—and scores of them—yes, many scores there are, scattered over the wild regions, and posted on the high places of benighted Asia, are missionary pioneers, rapidly preparing the way for the spread of the gospel!"

such a horrid nature, that I have not ventured to publish them.

Surely the contemplation of the sufferings I have already related of a noble-minded British officer, suffering in his country's cause, whose government has left him to his fate, is enough to make "an angel weep;" and if thou, gentle reader, art not thus affected, I would ask

"Se non piangi, di che pianger suoli?"

For my part, the blood tingles at my fingers' ends whilst I write these horrors.

After having been above two months in this noisome dungeon he was removed to the house of the chief of the police, he then openly announced his return to Christianity, and that his avowal of Islamism was forced from him. The chief of the police (Meeree Schab) informed him that all his property had been seized by the Ameer, his papers burnt, and his instruments sold by auction;* that the Reiss had been the cause of his imprisonment,

* Colonel Stoddart's sextant was brought to Orenburg, and General Peroffsky kindly purchased it, with the intention of restoring it to Colonel Stoddart's family; it was, however, lost. During my recent visit to Russia I saw several books this unfortunate prisoner had used at Bokhara, with his annotations on the margin.

having persuaded the Ameer, that the letters brought by Colonel Stoddart were forgeries; that he had only come to Bokhara for traitorous purposes; and that, in fact, he was nothing but an infamous spy.

During the years 1839–40 Colonel Stoddart was again twice imprisoned, but happily not in the well, and he was as often taken into favour. The Ameer never stated any reason for the first of these imprisonments. The Colonel attributed the second to the Ameer's apprehension that he might escape to, or communicate with, Sir Richmond Shakspear, who was, during that period, at Khiva.

After the third imprisonment the Ameer had Colonel Stoddart removed to the palace, and placed under the *surveillance* of (the chief cook (*doster-hanchi*), named Abd-ool-Halik, who afterwards became, and it is believed is now, Grand Vizier of Bokhara; he having rendered great service to the Ameer in his male harem.) Here Colonel Stoddart's life was passed in a more agreeable manner, although strictly watched, and subject to the insults which every one was at liberty to inflict upon a Christian, who had relapsed from Islamism. These insults, anxiety, and the restraint to which he was subject, now brought on a serious attack of typhus fever. The servants of Abd-ool-Halik, thinking

that Colonel Stoddart was too weak to complain, and caring little for the life of a Christian, left him for several days without food; and he would undoubtedly have perished had not the Ameer sent his physician, Mausam-e-Djooneet, an excellent man, who saved his life, by seeing that wholesome food was brought to him daily.

After a long and lingering convalescence the Ameer transferred him to Naib Abd-ool-Samet Khan, one of the greatest scoundrels in Bokhara, (in whose house Dr. Wolff was received on his arrival at Bokhara, by order of the Ameer). Here he had certainly greater liberty; and, for the first time, found means to communicate with his friends at Cabul; this fellow having been, undoubtedly, well paid for allowing it.

After Colonel Stoddart's first imprisonment reports reached England that he was murdered, and his family immediately put on mourning; but in the year 1841, several letters were received from him, in which he entreats his friends never to believe any rumours of his death.

The following remarkable letter was written by Colonel Stoddart at this time, and reached London on the 3d November, 1841; and in laying it before the public, I think it right to state, that when I communicated the original to the Secretary

of State for Foreign Affairs, I was officially informed that various communications had been received from Colonel Stoddart during the years 1839–40.

"*Bokhara, 26th June,* 1841.
10 P.M.

"A painful three years have passed away without my being able to hear and give any news, and I venture to inquire of my kind friends what they are doing, and to beg a line in reply, to be forwarded by Persia, and left at the Foreign Office.

"May God have protected you, as He has me, and spared many blessings in His mercy to cheer your life! To me, all that is left in this world of change, is to the good; for I was gone myself for a time, and had fairly counted not what I left behind, but those I was hoping to rejoin in the mercy we rejoice in, assured that the loiterers would soon follow, and top Death's grizzly fence. My time, however, was not yet come; and I have again advanced 'once more into the breach' before me; and, whenever that call may come, pray that my heart may be well strung with joy in Him who has led us, and whom we know we never should leave as our only hope and strength.

"You must not expect a detailed letter from me, as I am not free to relate all my work at Bokhara, suffice it that the obstacles which opposed me at the onset have melted like snow in the midsummer-sun, slowly and surely; and I am now only waiting a letter from Government to leave the field we have won. . . . The Oozbegs have all along been those who *solitudinem faciunt*, &c.; and my appearance here, after the success at Heraut,

somewhat palled their sensibilities; and when the sword at Cabul, and the scabbard at Khiva, effected such immense changes upon the *status quo*, our agency was regarded as Heaven-directed; and these people, who, on my arrival, professed never to have heard who the English were, trembled at their new neighbours, and now deprecate their wrath. They call it the Indus expedition, but its effects have been felt to the Baltic .... I received a packet for the first time since July, 1838, last week; and find myself, to my surprise, an old Major of '39 ..... I was describing the pace of Colleton's pontoon raft system, adapted as a steamboat on the Hudson, where it was called a 'cigar boat,' one of my hearers, who has been in India, said, 'I have seen so many able things produced by you Frangies, that I fear, at last, you will all become disbelievers, even in the existence of a God.' I shuddered at the idea, but it is too true that wisdom, if not founded on its 'beginning' and knowledge, too often leads vain man astray. These people have a story, that Plato was contemporary with our Saviour, and hearing of His miracles, declared it was from God, but that it was addressed to the ignorant; and that the learned and wise were not required to conform to it! Alas! how truly this false story caricatures the practical fact ....

"Yours sincerely,

"CHARLES STODDART."

At this period I wrote to Colonel Stoddart, assuring him that I would never believe any *reports* of his death. This letter I sent through the Foreign Office, and never received any answer.

What must have been the feelings of my wretched friend when he wrote that beautiful, touching epistle! Let us pause a moment to consider his position. Colonel Stoddart was sent on a special mission of great importance by the British government. He had fully achieved the purpose for which he had been sent, after having been *three times* imprisoned, and subjected to such horrors that it is wonderful how even his iron constitution could have borne up against them. He might easily have left Bokhara; but he says, after having overcome all the obstacles which opposed him at the commencement, *he was anxiously waiting an order from the government to "leave the field he had won!"* Did such an order reach him? I say, No! Was it ever written? No copy of any such letter was to be found among the mass of documents which were submitted to me by the Earl of Aberdeen's direction—no document that could lead me to believe that any—the slightest—effort had been made by the British government in behalf of this faithful envoy. And why should there be? Who was Colonel Stoddart? Was he allied to the aristocracy? Had he parliamentary or other influence? Had he relations who were likely to raise a clamour if their relative had been abandoned? None of these. Colonel Stoddart was

a mere soldier of fortune—a brave, honourable, honest man—and, therefore, not worth thinking about. Had he been even a regular bred diplomatist, there might have been some reason for exertion; but to make any stir concerning a man about whom it was not likely any one would care, unless to inquire about his arrears of pay or salary, really the idea must have appeared quite absurd to the diplomatic gentlemen in their comfortably warmed and carpeted rooms in Downing Street; and, perhaps, they may smile now while they contemplate the horrible sufferings of their victims, which a little exertion on their part might have averted.

A government having extensive relations like the British, has frequently occasion to send intelligent men on important missions attended with great personal danger. The uninitiated reader would naturally think that one of the regular experienced diplomatists would be sent on these important occasions. By no means. These gentlemen never go where there is personal danger. They look out for a Colonel Stoddart. Should the mission succeed, the gentlemen in Downing Street take to themselves credit for their sagacity in sending him; should it fail, they call their envoy an "*innocent traveller*," and coolly say, "Que diable allait il faire dans cette galère."

Count Woronzow, in presence of the British minister at St. Petersburg, when I was craving the Emperor's aid for Dr. Wolff, Count Woronzow, I say, actually blamed Colonel Stoddart for not having abandoned his post when General Peroffsky had procured his liberation. I told the Count, my friend had acted perfectly right in sacrificing his life rather than his honour.

The gentlemen in Downing Street have adopted a mode of proceeding with these military diplomatists which must materially diminish their labour, and totally put an end to the necessity of even the appearance of anxiety. It is simply to say they are dead: "The man's dead, and there's an end on't."

In the case of my unfortunate friend, no sooner did Saleh Mahommed's lying statement (the man is now a convicted scoundrel) reach Downing Street, when these gentlemen, without even taking the trouble to send to the Royal Geographical Society to inquire in what part of the world Bokhara was situated, officially announced that Colonel Stoddart had died at "Bokhara in *Persia!*" I can assure the reader that I am not joking now; the above melancholy fact will be found in the "Monthly Army List" for March 1843. Fearing that this display of ignorance might be perpetuated in the "Annual Army List," I wrote to the Secretary-at-

War a letter, in which I expressed to him my desire to avert such a misfortune, and respectfully informed him that Bokhara was an independent nation, more than twice as big as England and Wales, and that it had no more to do with *Persia* than with *Russia* or *China*.

I received in reply a letter of thanks, and an intimation that the word "*Persia*" would be left out in the "Annual Army List." And so it was!

CHAPTER II.

The King of Bokhara wishes to send Stoddart with an Embassy to Russia—Stoddart's Patriotic Refusal—Remarks on Stoddart's Noble Conduct—An English Soldier's Sense of Duty—Why a French Soldier has more Reason to have Confidence in his Government than the British Soldier has—What is Courage?—The Roman Gend'arme—Attempt to poison Stoddart—King of Bokhara writes to Queen Victoria—Arrival of a Russian Embassy at Bokhara—Stoddart removes to the House of the Russian Ambassador—Noble Conduct of M. Kostromitinoff—Captain Conolly asks permission to visit Bokhara—Obtains leave of the King of Kokan to leave his Dominions on Certain Conditions—The Ameer grants Conolly's Request—Conolly ordered to reside with the Naib—Applies for Permission to see Stoddart—Stoddart ordered to return to the Naib's—Gloomy Reports—Conolly's first Audience with the Ameer—Conolly accused of being a Spy—A Messenger brings a Letter from Lord Palmerston—Lord Palmerston's Messenger Decapitated—Stoddart's Account of Lord Palmerston's Letter—Ameer considers this Letter a Grave Insult—Treats the Officers with greater Cruelty—General Peroffsky demands Stoddart's Release—Stoddart's Noble Conduct—Author's Interview with General Peroffsky—Innocent Travellers—Lord Ellenborough's Letter to the King of Bokhara—The Russian Embassy leaves Bokhara.

25-6-42

CHAPTER II.

THE King of Bokhara determined to send an embassy to Russia, and proposed to Colonel Stoddart to accompany it. The Colonel replied that he would most willingly do so; but that he could not without first obtaining the permission of his government.

Dreadful must have been the struggle of my poor friend's feelings on that anxious occasion. Had he accepted the King of Bokhara's offer, in a couple of months he would have been at Orenburg free; and in two months more, he might have been in England. The struggle between the love of liberty and his position of British Envoy, must have been severe; but so well do I know my poor friend's principles, that I am sure that struggle, agonising as it must have been, was momentary; one short word would instantly disperse all doubt: that word was *duty*,—a word always present in the mind of a true soldier. The victim calmly resigns

himself to his fate, relies upon the mercy of his God, and leaves the responsibility of the consequences to those who imposed the duty upon him.

It is this sense of duty, implicit obedience to orders, and a firm belief that no one is exposed to *unnecessary* danger; that make the British soldier or sailor what he is.

My opinion is, that moral, and even physical courage are not innate, but acquired qualities; and that if Spaniards and Neapolitans do not fight like Frenchmen or Englishmen, the reason is, that they are by no means sure that they will not be abandoned by their chiefs, or their government, while the English soldier is quite sure that he will not be abandoned by his commander, or exposed to needless danger. Should he, however, reflect upon the order given to abandon the prisoners at Caubul, and upon the fate of Colonel Stoddart and Captain Conolly, he may not have quite the same confidence in his government. Now, a French soldier has no occasion either to distrust his commander or his government.

Some years ago, travelling between Rome and Naples, the country was so infested with brigands that an escort was declared to be necessary, and I had four mounted *carabinieri* to guard my carriage, commanded by a corporal, who rode with a loaded

carabine on the coach-box. I took my seat by his side and found him very intelligent, and by his own account an old soldier. In the course of conversation I asked him whether, in case of an attack, I could depend upon his men to defend us.

He very coolly replied, "Certainly not, that for his own part he should take care of his own skin."

I expressed my astonishment that a soldier should think of running away, and still more, that he should have the effrontery to avow it.

He replied, "Captain, such as you see me, a mere corporal of *carabinieri*, I am incapable of telling you a lie; you have put the question to me, and I have told you the truth. I am aware that an escort of English cavalry would allow themselves to be cut to pieces rather than abandon their charge; but the cases are totally different."

"How so?"

"Suppose now, an English corporal, in performance of his duty, had his arm shot off, what would be the consequence?"

"Why, he would receive his discharge and a pension, which would render him comfortable for the rest of his days. And you; suppose you lost an arm?"

"I should be discharged, certainly; but as to the pension (here he gave a comical whistle)—no,

no, I should be asking alms at the corner of the street in the name of St. Gennaro. As a corporal of *gensd'armes* with my pay, which is but small, and the *regalo*, which noble gentlemen like *sua excellenza* are in the habit of presenting me (here he took off his cocked hat with one hand, and extended the other slowly towards me, as he saw me taking a crown from my pocket), with these I contrive to live and enjoy myself; in fact I am so content with my present position that I am determined to keep a whole skin, as the only means of maintaining it. Offer us discharges and pensions—shew us that if taken by the brigands we are not abandoned by the government, and you will find that we Neapolitans can fight as well as you English."*

After this rather long digression I return to my narrative.

Colonel Stoddart now frequently observed that the Naib made attempts to poison him, and he was constantly on his guard; this wretch was, probably,

* Only let the idea get abroad that English officers are to be abandoned by the government; that on being sent on embassies they may be imprisoned, and even murdered, with impunity; and, like the Neapolitan corporal, they will begin to take care of themselves, and encumber their brains with reasonings about "expediency" and "untoward events."

diverted from his intention by the hopes of a considerable recompense, with which Colonel Stoddart succeeded in exciting his avarice.

At this period the Ameer shewed him marks of kindness, treated him with great distinction, and asked him to resilver his mirrors, to make thermometers, and candles which would burn without smoke.

A letter now arrived from the Sultan to the Ameer, desiring him to restore Colonel Stoddart to liberty. This induced the Ameer to address a letter to the Queen of England, in which (according to Colonel Stoddart's statement) the Ameer asked her Majesty if she would be reconciled to him in case he restored the Colonel to liberty.

In the year 1841, as soon as the intelligence of the arrival of the Russian Embassy reached Bokhara, the Ameer publicly announced that it was his intention to send Colonel Stoddart home by Orenburg, when the Embassy left; and he even restored to him some of his property, among other things, his sword and cocked hat.

On the 7th of September, 1841, the Russian mission had their first interview with Colonel Stoddart, and delivered to him the letters with which they were charged.

Shortly afterwards, when the Ameer started for

Kokan, with which country he was at war, he ordered Colonel Stoddart to reside in the house of the Russian embassy; and he accordingly took up his residence there, and was most kindly received. The Vizier was most anxious to oppose this, and retain Stoddart with him; but when Mirza Zichariah, one of the Vizier's people, came to the embassy, demanding, in the name of the Vizier, that Colonel Stoddart should be given up, the Colonel prayed most earnestly that they would not allow him to go, as he was sure he should be put to death. The Russian Envoy having reassured him, sent with him his interpreter, M. Kostromitinoff, with positive orders not to return, unless accompanied by Colonel Stoddart. The Vizier wishing to retain Colonel Stoddart, M. Kostromitinoff seized him by the hand, and declared that he would not depart without him. They were then both allowed to return to the embassy.

Such was the state of affairs up to the 11th November, 1841, on which day the Ameer granted Captain Conolly's request to visit Bokhara. Immediately Colonel Stoddart sent Captain Conolly's letter to the Ameer making this request, it was granted; for several merchants had reported to him that that officer's mission to Central Asia was to endeavour to excite the sovereigns of Kokan

and Khiva against him; and he was, therefore, most anxious to get Captain Conolly into his power. So great, indeed, was his anxiety, that as the state of war with Kokan rendered the transmission of a letter to that city an affair of great difficulty and danger, he promised freedom to a slave, if he should succeed in conveying his answer to Captain Conolly.

Encouraged by the kind and courteous terms in which the Ameer granted his request, Captain Conolly, after much trouble, succeeded in obtaining the permission of the King of Kokan, Mohammed Ali, which was only granted on condition that he went round by Tashkend, so that he might not become acquainted with the road the Ameer would have to follow to reach Kokan.

After many difficulties, in consequence of the state of the country, Captain Conolly succeeded in reaching Djizakh, where the governor informed him that the Ameer was at Hodjend. He hastened there, expecting a kind reception; the Ameer had, however, already left that town, and Captain Conolly overtook him at a place called Mehram.

The Ameer being informed of Captain Conolly's arrival, ordered his immediate attendance. He was conducted to a tent without a carpet, where he was allowed to remain two hours unnoticed. An order

then came from the Ameer that he was to go to the Naib, Abd-ool Samet Khan, who accompanied the army; and this man was ordered to convey him immediately to Bokhara, where they arrived on the 9th of November, 1841.

The very day of his arrival Captain Conolly sent a note to Colonel Stoddart, informing him that his desire and intention were to have called upon him immediately on his arrival to pay his respects, but that the Naib had opposed this, saying that such a step was completely opposed to Oozbeg usages. Colonel Stoddart being most anxious to see a fellow-countryman, requested the Russian mission to obtain the Ameer's permission that an interview might be allowed; and the Russian envoy immediately made an application to the Ameer for that purpose.

Now the Naib, seeing that Colonel Stoddart's residence at the Russian embassy deprived him of a considerable source of profit, applied to the Ameer, and succeeded in persuading him, not only to allow the interview requested, but to order that Colonel Stoddart should remove altogether, and take up his residence with Captain Conolly in the Naib's house.

At this time the most gloomy reports were spread throughout Bokhara concerning the fate the

Ameer intended for his new guest. Imprisonment was the mildest punishment according to these rumours, and that was considered as certain.

In consequence of the Ameer's order, much to the regret of the whole Russian mission, Colonel Stoddart took his leave of them on the 11th of November, 1841, and went to reside at the Naib's.

The better to deceive Colonel Stoddart, the Ameer that very evening declared publicly at the entrance of the Russian embassy, that he should order that officer to accompany the mission to Russia.

On the 15th of November, 1841, Captain Conolly was, for the first time, ordered to the palace: an audience with the Ameer was not granted; he was questioned by the master of the ceremonies, and was asked, "What he came for? what he intended doing? and whether he had brought any letters?"

The next day, the 16th, both officers were ordered to attend the palace. They were admitted to the Ameer's presence—coldly received, but obtained permission to visit the Russian embassy.

From this time to the 28th or 29th of November nothing particular occurred, but at that time the Naib, terrified by the sinister reports that were circulated in the town as to the ultimate intention

of the Ameer with respect to these officers, and not wishing that the Ameer's anger should reach them in his house, represented to his master that he was too poor to support them with Captain Conolly's numerous suite; and, in consequence, the Ameer assigned to them a house in the town, and granted them three tillas (1*l.* 10*s.*) per diem for their support.

On the 2d December the Ameer ordered these gentlemen again to the palace; and, addressing Captain Conolly, said, "That as he had not brought any letters for him he suspected he was a spy; that Bokhara was not so easy to conquer as Affghanistan; that he would put him in prison; and that, then *the English would only have to come with some troops to rescue him.*"

Captain Conolly replied, "That the Queen of England never employed such subterfuges with foreign powers; and that it was an offence to imagine for a moment that a government, powerful as the British, could descend to such duplicity as the Ameer imagined."

The Ameer then dismissed them, and they were forced to pass a wretched night in the palace. On the following day, however, they were allowed to return to their residence.

At this time a messenger arrived, bringing

important letters to Colonel Stoddart. This man was immediately conducted to the palace, and the letters were taken to the Ameer, who ordered the bearer of them to be chained to the wall of the passage which leads to the presence-chamber. In a short time one of the Ameer's people came to this messenger, and said, "Can you say the true believer's prayer?"

The man began: "There is but one God, and ....." Here he hesitated, having in his fright forgotten the remainder; and in an instant his head was struck off! most cruel

The arrival of the letters brought by this man threw a momentary ray of hope on the fate of the unfortunate British officers, as among them was Lord Palmerston's answer to the letter which the Ameer had addressed to the Queen of England in the year 1840.

In this letter Lord Palmerston writes *in English* to the Ameer; that the Queen is disposed to re-establish amicable relations with him; and that the Governor-General of India had already received an order to enter into direct relation with the Ameer, by sending to him one of his officers.

At first the Ameer seemed disposed to receive this communication favourably; but on reflection, he told the officers that he considered all this as a

mere evasion—that he was not satisfied—that the letter came only from the Vizier—that the *Queen herself* ought to have replied to his letter.

Since the arrival of that unfortunate letter, the communication between the Ameer and the officers became daily more and more disagreeable, especially after the intelligence reached Bokhara of the extermination of the British troops at Cabul and of the death of Sir Alexander Burnes.

On the 16th of December, 1841, the Ameer gave orders to the Affghan Ambassador, who had accompanied Captain Conolly, to leave Bokhara in twenty-four hours; and on the 20th of December he arrested the two officers in the lodging of the chief of the artillery. This was the fourth imprisonment.

Captain Abbott relates in the account of his mission to Khiva, that the Russian General Peroffsky demanded that Colonel Stoddart should be given up to the Russian Government: that the Ameer had Colonel Stoddart brought from the dark well in which he was imprisoned, introduced to his presence, explained to him the demand of the Russian Government, asked whether the Russians were likely to treat him well, and what he thought of the proposal. Colonel Stoddart replied, "The Russians would, undoubtedly, treat me well; but

when my own government demands me, what will your highness answer?" That the Ameer was much struck with the nobleness of such an answer from one who was a prisoner and hourly in danger of death; and, taking off his rich cloak of sables, made them clothe Colonel Stoddart in it, and lead him on horseback through Bokhara.

Captain Abbott further states that General Peroffsky afterwards confirmed the fact of his attempt to release Colonel Stoddart.

On my arrival in St. Petersburg in September last, the first officer that did me the honour to visit me was this General Peroffsky: on thanking him for his kind exertions on behalf of my friend, as related by Captain Abbott, the General informed me that he was Governor of Orenburg, when, by directions of the Russian Government, he demanded Colonel Stoddart's release, as a "*private traveller;*" that Colonel Stoddart was immediately set at liberty; and General Peroffsky was informed that he refused to leave Bokhara *at the solicitation of Russia.* This information astonished him much, but considering Colonel Stoddart merely as a traveller, he gave himself no further trouble about the matter. General Peroffsky assured me that, *had he been aware that the Colonel had been a diplomatic*

agent, he could have had him brought to Orenburg without the least difficulty.

Is it not a most extraordinary circumstance that a British envoy should be claimed as a "*private traveller?*" Had this been the only instance of such an application on behalf of Colonel Stoddart, one would be disposed to imagine that it resulted in a mistake,—that General Peroffsky and the Russian Government might have been ignorant of Colonel Stoddart's real position at Bokhara; we must, however, consider that the only effort made by the British Government on behalf of Colonel Stoddart and Captain Conolly (at least as far as I could learn at the Foreign Office, where they professed to have laid before me all the documents relating to this affair), was contained in a most extraordinary letter, addressed by Lord Ellenborough to the King of Bokhara, on assuming the government of India. This letter was not among the mass of documents laid before me by Lord Aberdeen's direction in the first instance. Having attentively read all those documents in the presence of Mr. Hammond at the Foreign Office, I expressed my astonishment to that gentleman, that among this immense mass of papers there was not the smallest scrap that could lead me to imagine that the government had made any effort

whatever on behalf of these unfortunate captives. It was then that Mr. Hammond drew from another receptacle a copy of Lord Ellenborough's memorable letter, and, handing it to me with a look of triumph, exclaimed, "You will see, Captain Grover, we have done something." On reading this letter, my astonishment was so great, that it absolutely fell from my hands, and I said to Mr. Hammond, "You call this doing something for my friend? If this letter should have reached its destination, all our efforts now are futile. This letter must have been the death-blow to my unfortunate friend." Mr. Hammond looked at me with astonishment; he had evidently forgotten or misapprehended the effect that letter must infallibly have produced had it reached its destination. He looked at me anxiously for an explanation, which I thus gave him: "You call this letter an effort made by the British Government for the relief of their envoys; now, in this letter, Lord Ellenborough denounces them as liars and spies. You will recollect that Colonel Stoddart and Captain Conolly were imprisoned by the Ameer of Bokhara under the suspicion of having falsely assumed the titles of envoys, to spy into the weakness of the land. Now, what says Lord Ellenborough's letter? That he is informed that two Englishmen are detained prisoners

at Bokhara; that all good and enlightened sovereigns protect instead of injuring '*innocent travellers;*' he therefore trusts his Majesty will order their release; and he will engage they shall never more enter his dominions!"

Can any comment of mine heighten the indignation every Englishman must feel on reading this statement?

The Russian embassy left Bokhara on the 17th April, 1842, when Colonel Stoddart and Captain Conolly were both alive. A letter was received from Captain Conolly at Cabul, which is mentioned in Lady Sale's and Lieutenant Eyre's narratives.

CHAPTER III.

Why the Author determined to investigate the Reports of the Death of Stoddart and Conolly — French Officers at Algiers — Congress at Florence — Remarks of a French General — Author arrives in England — Interview with Lord Fitzroy Somerset — Author determines to go to Bokhara — Writes to the Military Secretary — Interview with Mr. Addington — Saleh Mohammed's Story — His Story to Dr. Wolff at Meshed — Correspondence with Mr. Addington — Dr. Wolff proposes to go to Bokhara — Author's First Interview with Dr. Wolff — Public Meeting — Committee appointed — Interview with the Secretary of State.

43 to 74.

CHAPTER III.

The reader may, perhaps, be curious to know how it happened that, notwithstanding the government had officially announced in the "Army List" the death of Colonel Stoddart, and that the families of Colonel Stoddart and Captain Conolly had determined to mourn for them a *second time*, that I alone should doubt the authenticity of the intelligence which satisfied the government and the families, as I did on the previous occasion. After Colonel Stoddart's family had mourned for him on the first occasion, and this unfortunate victim wrote, desiring them not to believe any rumours of his death, I wrote to assure him that he had, at least, one friend who would never believe him dead on a mere rumour.

In the year 1840, being at Algiers, some French officers made some remarks to me about the sacrifice of British diplomatic agents in Central Asia, to which I did not pay much attention. On the

following year, attending the Scientific Congress at Florence, as a Fellow of our Royal Society, the first Committee named was to examine and experiment upon a substance which, it was declared, would resist musket-balls, and on this committee of four I had the honour of being nominated. The Grand Duke ordered that the experiments should be performed in his presence. The affair attracted the curiosity of all Florence, and brought me in communication with most of the distinguished naval and military men who were then in that city.

One day an old French General asked me if any recent intelligence had been received from the Bokhara captives. I replied, "that I believed not; that I was most anxious about Colonel Stoddart, who was my friend; that the only consolation I had was the certain conviction that every means was being employed by the British government for the relief of these unfortunate men." The General gave me a peculiar look, and said, "Did it never occur to you that these men were *intentionally sacrificed* by the British government?" I now laughed outright: "No, no, General; whatever sins of commission or omission the government of '*perfide* Albion' may have to answer for, the accusation of abandoning her public servants is one at which you must allow me to laugh." The General, however,

looked very serious, and replied in a tone so slow and solemn, that I no longer smiled: "Had these brave officers been Frenchmen, they would not have been allowed to linger in a dungeon at Bokhara. You seem to attach but little importance to what I say; but from what I have seen of your zeal and enthusiasm here in unmasking imposture, I am quite sure that if you are the friend of either of these wretched men, you will at least make some inquiries on the subject."

The General was right. I began to revolve in my mind all that I knew concerning my poor friend's mission; and when I returned to Nice, my anxiety increased from day to day, and my nights were frequently passed without sleep, knowing that whatever might be my friend's sufferings, he would be consoled with the certainty that he had at least *one friend* who would never give him up, who would never mourn for him as dead until he had absolute positive proof.

I began to entertain a vague idea that it might be possible, as the French General insinuated, that Colonel Stoddart had been sacrificed to some, to me incomprehensible, diplomatic object. The more I revolved in my mind these conversations with different officers at places so widely separated as Florence and Algiers, my doubts and uneasiness increased;

and, in 1843, I hastened to England, determined to proceed to Bokhara, to endeavour to clear up the mystery that hung over the fate of these envoys. I reached England on the 5th of June; and, on the 13th, I attended the levee of Lord Fitzroy Somerset, the Military Secretary, and handed to him the following letter:

"*Army and Navy Club,*
"*June 13th,* 1843.

"My Lord,

"Lieut.-Colonel Stoddart, so long confined at Bokhara, is my most particular friend. By accounts received by the last overland mail, it appears that he and Captain Conolly are still alive, and thus my anxiety about his fate is renewed.

"My object in now addressing your Lordship is to offer to start immediately, at my own cost and risk, to ascertain the fate of this excellent officer.

"The only assistance I require is, that the object of my journey be recognised. This, I doubt not, would enable me (for such a purpose) to obtain permission from the Russian government to descend the Wolga to Astrachan.

"Should I fail in obtaining the release of my friend, or even in reaching Bokhara, still, with the means at my disposal, I could not fail in obtaining information that might be important.

"Submitting these remarks to your Lordship's favourable consideration,

"I have the honour to be, &c.

"JOHN GROVER,
"Captain Unattached.

"*To Lord Fitzroy Somerset,*
"*K.C.B.*"

I had a long and interesting conversation with his Lordship, and left the Horse-Guards delighted with the kind reception I had met with, and at the interest that was taken in the fate of my friend. I told his Lordship I should be ready to start the following week, and, on returning home, instantly commenced the preparations for my journey.

On the 22d of June I received a note from Lord Fitzroy Somerset, suggesting that I should communicate with Lord Aberdeen on the subject of my letter of the 13th of June, I immediately wrote to his lordship, stating my intention of proceeding immediately to Bokhara, at *my own cost, risk, and on my own responsibility*, and requesting his Lordship to honour me with an interview. The same day I received a note from Mr. Addington, the Under-Secretary of State, requesting me to call the following day at the Foreign Office. I now considered my departure as certain, went immediately to my bankers, ordered the sale of property, that I might have ample funds to meet the expenses of my expedition, and made other arrangements for an immediate departure.

I considered the appointed interview with the Under-Secretary of State could only be for the purpose of giving me instructions, and making the final arrangements for the journey. The idea never

entered my mind that the government could have determined to refuse me the permission of proceeding at my own expense to Bokhara, without, at least, hearing what I had to say.

On being introduced to Mr. Addington, he entered into a long statement of the dangers of the journey I was about to undertake, evidently endeavouring to frighten me, I told him that I had well considered the question of danger before I presumed to submit my proposition to the Commander-in-Chief; that I knew the danger was great, but that the object I had in view—that of restoring two British officers to their country and friends, was well worth the risk of a life like mine; that great as was the regard I had for my friend, I was not regardless of my own safety, and had no intention whatever of seeing the inside of the dark well if I could avoid it. My intention was to obtain the permission of the Emperor of Russia to proceed through his dominions by Orenburg; thence I should despatch two trusty messengers, one to Khiva, and the other to Bokhara, stating distinctly the object of my journey, and requesting permission to be allowed to pass through the territories of the first, and enter into the kingdom of the latter. I should patiently wait at Orenburg the return of these messengers. Should the King of Khiva refuse

my request, I should take the caravan route to the east of the Sea of Aral. Should the King of Bokhara send a favourable answer, I would trust in him without hesitation, my mission being authenticated by the British government (and having a letter from the Queen), without which my journey would be useless; I told him that I possessed the ordinary degree of coolness and presence of mind; that I felt confident I should succeed in my object, or that, at all events, I should ascertain whether these gentlemen were in existence or no.

Should the King of Bokhara refuse my proposition, I should immediately return to England, and report to government the ill success of my mission; that even should I fail in entering the states of the King of Bokhara, still, with the means at my disposal, and the instruments I should take with me, I hoped to be able to obtain information that might be useful to my country.

Mr. Addington replied, "If your journey has other objects, that is another question." I felt a little hurt at this observation, and told him that my sole object was to obtain the release of Colonel Stoddart and Captain Conolly, that I should certainly travel with my eyes open, and senses awake; and thus, aided by my instruments, topographical

and physical knowledge might be obtained worth communicating.

Mr. Addington here observed, that probably the best mode of proceeding would be to communicate to me all the documents relating to Colonel Stoddart and Captain Conolly in possession of the Foreign Office, that I might take a few days for reflection, and should I then be still disposed to go, he would be happy to see me again. I was then introduced to Mr. Hammond; a large mass of papers was laid before me, which I read attentively from beginning to end. Among these documents the only one that at all approached the nature of evidence was the statement of Saleh Mohammed. This man gives a long and circumstantial account of the *public* execution of Colonel Stoddart and Captain Conolly. This Persian, however, merely relates what others told him. According to his own account, he was sent by Major Todd to join Captain Conolly. He says the execution took place "in *a square outside the prison*," and "*that many people assembled to behold the spectacle.*" His narrative is very circumstantial, and he concludes by saying, "One of the executioners gave me the foregoing relation." In fact, this Persian *knows nothing at all about the matter*, and, although at liberty, did not take the

trouble of attending this "spectacle." This document was without signature.

To obviate the necessity of again returning to this Saleh Mohammed, I will here state what Dr. Wolff says of this man, whom he met at Meshed in March last. He is described by the Doctor as a regular scoundrel, and he thus relates what he said about the public execution:

"Saleh Mohammed told me that the two persons who were put to death, and of whom he gave a circumstantial account to Colonel Shiel, *may have been two other persons*, and that the executioner may have belied him. Besides this, I must confess that two things are suspicious to me in the extreme. He first told me that the executioner who told him the story had been the executioner of Stoddart; on another day I asked him which of the two executioners had put Stoddart to death; he replied, he did not know. He, moreover, makes a claim upon Colonel Shiel for 120 tomauns, which I have learned from different quarters he has already received from Major Todd."

This is extracted from a letter of Dr. Wolff's, dated Meshed, March 24, 1844.

Colonel Shiel, in sending this statement to the Foreign Office, merely adds that the narrator is a prepossessing young man. It is astonishing how readily Persian interesting young men can invent a lie which they think will be favourably received by the listener. Baron Hügel, in his "Travels in

Cashmir," which have just been published, relates the following anecdote :

"Mirza, who had been in the town, returned presently with the tidings that a European traveller had just arrived at Jamú, and, after some trouble, I found that the stranger was on his way from Kashmir to Lahor, and was merely resting one day at Jamú to provide himself with necessaries.

"I thought this could be no other than Mr. Vigne, an English gentleman, then travelling in India, and, as Mirza inclined to the same opinion, I immediately wrote a short note, offering to share my stock, such as it was, with a traveller from Europe, and to pay him any attention in my power. With this note I despatched Mohan, who soon came back and told me that, instead of an Englishman, he had found a Persian, who could neither read nor write. I mention this unimportant circumstance to shew how cautious travellers should be in trusting to the opinions of the natives of the north of India. Mirza knew perfectly well that the stranger was not a European; but as soon as he observed that I heartily wished it might prove to be a countryman of my own, he framed his measures, not according to the truth, but according to what he fancied would best please me to hear. In this instance, though he knew I should soon discover my error, he did not attempt to undeceive me; and by this my readers will judge how little those people deprecate falsehood, when the case may be really serious, and the truth more difficult to find out."

After reading this, I think I hear the reader

exclaim, "Stop a minute, Captain; the anecdote of your German Baron can have nothing whatever to do with Saleh Mohammed's narrative, unless, indeed, you can shew that it was a statement likely to be favourably received by the British government."

My good friend, you are perfectly right. But before I attempt to justify the applicability (if I may be allowed the word) of Baron Hügel's anecdote, I will take the liberty of making a distinct declaration, which is, that, in the course of this trifling work, I will never put forth any statement or even insinuation without having what I consider sufficient authority, although, in some instances, it would not be prudent to mention publicly the source from whence my information was derived.

Now the only evidence I can bring forward to shew that Saleh Mohammed's statement was favourably received by the British government, is the simple fact that he received the large sum of 3000 rupees for making that statement; while it is to be remarked, that neither the British government, nor any one connected in any way with the government, has subscribed one farthing towards the mission of Dr. Wolff, which it was hoped would clear up the mystery hanging over the fate of two British envoys; that, moreover, when the good Doctor was imprisoned by the King of Bokhara, and a small

advance of money might be necessary to save the life of that excellent man, the British government actually required security for any sums that might be advanced by Colonel Shiel for that purpose, and that *such a guarantee was given and accepted.* And the sum that was advanced by the British envoy at Teheran for the ransom of Dr. Wolff, amounting to 400*l.*, was claimed, immediately paid, and the guarantee given up.

Having attentively perused all the documents Mr. Hammond had the kindness to lay before me, including Lord Ellenborough's never-to-be-forgotten letter on behalf of the "*innocent travellers*" (which the reader will have seen at page 41), I told him that my original resolution was unshaken, and that I was now convinced that my friend had not been murdered.

When Mr. Hammond heard that I proposed going through Russia, he asked why I did not take the route by Persia, as we had an envoy at Teheran who could assist me; that the road to Meshed was open, and the caravans passed from Meshed to Bokhara.

I told him that, of course, that was the readiest route, but that I took it for granted that *there must be some insuperable difficulties on that side*, or our envoy at Teheran would certainly ere this have ob-

tained some intelligence of the prisoners. I added, that I was determined to start as soon as possible, that I would take any route he might advise, and that I should like again to see Mr. Addington.

Mr. Hammond suggested that I should take a day or two to deliberate. I told him that my mind was made up, that there was no occasion for deliberation, or time to be lost, and that I should like to see Mr. Addington immediately if he should be at leisure.

I was again ushered into the presence of the Under-Secretary of State, who seemed much surprised that my determination was unshaken. He said, that the danger attending such an expedition was so great, that he did not think Lord Aberdeen would feel himself justified in giving me the sanction I required: that there would be no objection whatever to my proceeding to Bokhara, in search of my friend, as a *private traveller*, and that Lord Aberdeen would willingly afford me every assistance at his command, should I be disposed to undertake such a journey. I told him I was astonished to hear him advise my proceeding as a *private traveller*, as he must be well aware, that as such, I should certainly be imprisoned as a spy, long before reaching Bokhara; or that, should I even succeed in reaching that city, it would only be to enter the

dark well. I said, that I was surprised that my offer was not eagerly accepted: that in case of success, I should restore two deserving officers to their country. Should I return, having failed in my object, I should bring information that might be important; and, should I be cut off, the British nation would gain seven shillings a-day by my disaster.

On leaving the Under-Secretary of State, I desired him clearly and distinctly to understand, that I had made all the preparations for my journey; that I was prepared to undertake it at my own *cost* and *risk*, and on my *own responsibility;* and that I asked no assistance whatever from her majesty's government, but the simple recognition of the object of my mission, without which, he must be well aware, that it would be worse than folly to attempt to reach Bokhara; and that I trusted he would have the kindness to send me a written answer to my proposition.

On the 26th of June, I received a letter from Mr. Addington, declining my offer, but so completely mis-stating its nature, that I considered it my duty instantly to write him the following note:—

"*Captain Grover to Mr. Addington.*

"*Army and Navy Club, June* 25, 1843.

"Sir,—I have received your note of the 24th instant, and take the liberty merely of observing, that in referring

to my proposition, you omit all notice of its most important feature, viz., that the expedition was to be undertaken at my own '*cost* and *risk*.'

"As it is usual in all official correspondence to allude to a proposition, as nearly as possible in the terms in which it was made, I trust you will have the goodness to correct this omission.

"I have the honour to be,
"Your obedient servant,
"JOHN GROVER,
"Captain Unattached."

"*To Henry Unwin Addington, Esq.,*
"*Under-Secretary of State,*
"*Foreign Affairs.*"

In reply, I received the following note with the corrected version of Mr. Addington's letter:—

"Mr. Addington presents his compliments to Captain Grover, and has great pleasure in correcting the omission which had by an oversight, been made in Mr. Addington's note of the 24th instant, and to which Captain Grover has called Mr. Addington's attention in his letter of to-day.

"Mr. Addington requests that Captain Grover will have the goodness to substitute the corrected version of the note herewith inclosed, for the former note; and, that he will return the latter to Mr. Addington.

"*Foreign Office, 26th June,* 1843."

The reader will perceive in this note a curious jumble of former and latter, and that, in fact, the Under-Secretary of State expresses precisely the re-

verse of what he means. Guessing, however, his meaning, I returned the letter of the 24th of June, and substituted in its place the following "corrected version:"—

"Mr. Addington presents his compliments to Captain Grover, and begs to inform him, that he has laid before Lord Aberdeen Captain Grover's desire to proceed, at his own cost and risk, to Bokhara, in the character of a British officer officially sent, in order to obtain intelligence as to the fate of Colonel Stoddart.

"Lord Aberdeen stated to Mr. Addington, that he would not feel himself justified in investing Captain Grover with an official character; but that his lordship would very willingly afford to Captain Grover every facility, and grant him every protection at his command, for the purpose of prosecuting his researches with greater effect, if Captain Grover should be disposed to proceed to Bokhara as a private traveller, for the purpose above-mentioned.

"*Foreign Office, June* 24, 1843.

"*To Captain Grover.*"

I will here pause to make a few remarks on the above correspondence.

Full of anxiety for the fate of a dear friend, I returned to England from a distant country, where I had been some years established, determined to start for Bokhara, to clear up the mystery that was hanging over his fate. As a soldier, I addressed

myself to the commander-in-chief, my proposition appears to be favourably received; and, as a matter of course, I am referred to the Foreign Office. What is the reception I meet with here? I humbly crave the honour of an audience of the Earl of Aberdeen: this is refused; and I am unceremoniously handed over to irresponsible subalterns, who had evidently made up their minds to refuse my request, before they had heard by what arguments I was prepared to support it.

The reader will perceive, that the only thing I asked, viz., a document to shew that I was not a spy, was refused; but to induce me to undertake this journey as a "*private traveller*," which the Earl of Aberdeen must well know could only lead to my destruction, I am tempted with the assurance, "that his lordship would very willingly afford me every facility, and grant me every protection at his command, for the purpose of prosecuting my researches with greater effect, if I should be disposed to proceed to Bokhara as a '*private traveller.*'"

The reader will probably have observed a rather remarkable circumstance in the above correspondence—I am not even thanked. Thanked! I have no doubt the Earl of Aberdeen, and the gentlemen at the Foreign Office, thought I de-

served to be at the bottom of the Oxus, or in one of the deepest recesses of the "dark well," for having presumed to hint at the possibility, that any person whose death they had announced should be still languishing in captivity, and that I should have the audacity to presume to take upon myself the duties and functions of the Secretary of State, by exhibiting an anxiety for the fate of two British envoys, about whom the British government did not think it worth while to make inquiry.

At this time I happened to meet a right honourable friend, who has had considerable experience in diplomacy. I related to him all I had done, and gave him an account of my interviews with Mr. Addington and Mr. Hammond at the Foreign Office. After laughing heartily for some time, he thus spoke:—

"My dear Grover, you have been going the wrong way to work. You talk of going to Bokhara at your own cost! Now, although it is very generous of you to risk your life, and expend a couple of thousand pounds, to rescue your friend from the fangs of a merciless tyrant, depend upon it, this will not influence the government in the least.

"At the Foreign Office, they do not care one straw about the expense; but I am sure, they will rather allow these wretched men to be sacri-

ficed than suffer you to do what the government has neglected doing. At the Foreign Office, they are not aware that you are a stanch Tory; and they do not understand your motives.

"No, my good fellow, allow me to speak to the Duke of * * * who, I know, ought, and I believe, does, feel obliged to you, for the assistance you rendered him when a commoner in his elections. His grace will speak to Lord Aberdeen, and explain all. The plan will be adopted by the government as *their* idea; you will be employed; the expense will not be considered; and you will return with honour and glory.

"The government departments invariably resist all interference from without. I know they are ashamed of having put forth Saleh Mohammed's statement; but having put it forth as their justification, you will find they will stick to it through thick and thin. Every means is being employed to check subscriptions. Fortunately for you, you have no occasion to reckon upon the tender mercies of the Secretary of State, and any system of annoyance that may be attempted will fail; but you must be upon your guard."

I declined my friend's assistance.

Mr. Addington's letter of the 24th June having

crushed the plans I had so anxiously formed for the relief of my friend, my mind was filled with anxiety and doubt as to what I could do in behalf of the wretched men, of whose existence and imprisonment I could not bring myself to doubt. I was excessively disgusted at the official indifference of the authorities at the Foreign Office as to the fate of their victims, which appeared particularly glaring, when I contrasted it with the kind anxiety exhibited by Lord Fitzroy Somerset. I however fear, that at this time, my motives were not clearly understood even at the Horse Guards.

I was at this period a candidate for promotion, and received a letter written by the direction of the commander-in-chief, informing me that my claim would be taken into consideration. Happening, however, to meet a gentleman officially employed, he thus addressed me:—

"Does it not occur to you, Captain Grover, that the steps you are now taking with respect to Stoddart and Conolly will interfere with your promotion?"

"Interfere with my promotion! What can an act of simple benevolence have to do with my promotion?"

"Oh, you do not perceive." . . . .

Here the conversation was changed.

I think it right distinctly to say, that I am quite sure the steps I have taken in behalf of Colonel Stoddart would not in any way have interfered with my promotion, as long as the Commander-in-Chief was satisfied of the purity of my intentions; and that the gentleman who made the above remark to me was actuated by a feeling of personal, though mistaken kindness, for which I have ever since felt grateful.

Now, although I had every confidence in the justice of the authorities at the Horse-Guards, it occurred to me that the mere circumstance of my being at the present moment a candidate for promotion might possibly prevent a just appreciation of my motives. Immediately, therefore, on leaving the Horse-Guards, I wrote a letter to the Commander-in-Chief withdrawing my claim for promotion.

Returning from this personal digression I resume my narrative. I revolved anxiously in my mind the possibility of reaching Bokhara as a private traveller. I consulted all those best qualified to give an opinion on the subject, to whom I could obtain access. The universal opinion was that the thing was impossible. As to attempting disguise, even had I possessed a sufficient knowledge of the

language and customs of the country, and could I even have been sure of success, I would not have practised a deception to save the life of my friend. In the midst of these doubts and anxieties a newspaper was brought to me, in which I found the following letter written by the Rev. Dr. Wolff.

"PROPOSAL FOR THE LIBERATION OF COLONEL STODDART AND CAPTAIN CONOLLY.

"*To all the Officers of the British Army.*

"13 *Richmond Green, Richmond, July* 2.

"Gentlemen,

"Though a missionary and a clergyman myself, and not an officer, I do not take up my pen in order to excite your sympathy in behalf of a clergyman or missionary, but in behalf of two of your fellow-officers, Captain Conolly and Colonel Stoddart, who are at present captives in the great city of Bokhara; but having been myself two months at Bokhara, and knowing, as I do, the character of the inhabitants of Bokhara, I am fully convinced that the report of their having been put to death is exceedingly doubtful—much more so by the source from which the report originated.

"If, therefore, one of you, gentlemen, would be inclined to accompany me to Bokhara, or merely pay the expenses of my journey there, I am ready to go there; and I am fully confident that I shall be able, with God's help, to liberate them from captivity, with the assistance of my Turcoman friends in the desert of Khiva, and one

of the Dervishes; but I would undertake the journey without making myself responsible to the British Government, and entirely on my own responsibility.

"I merely want the expense of my journey, and not *one single farthing as a compensation;* even in case of complete success.

"I shall be ten days more at Richmond, Surrey; if, therefore, one of you brave officers is now ready to accompany me, or to assist me in making the journey, let him come to me, and we may talk over the matter more fully.

"I am, Gentlemen,

"Your humble servant,

"JOSEPH WOLFF,

"*Late Curate of High Hoyland, Yorkshire, formerly Missionary in Persia, Bokhara, and Affghanistan.*"

I read the above letter with feelings of delight, and of admiration for the noble proposition of Dr. Wolff, with whom I was not acquainted, and who I imagined was in a distant land. The following day I proceeded to Richmond, and had my first interview with the worthy Doctor, and thus commenced a friendship, which, I trust, will only terminate with the death of one of us. I found that Dr. Wolff was well acquainted with Captain Conolly, whom he had met in India, and who had rendered him great assistance when he escaped from captivity. He shewed me a passport he had received from the King of Bokhara; from his knowledge of the

country, of the King, and of the language, he had no doubt whatever but, with the blessing of God, he should succeed in clearing-up the dreadful mystery that enveloped the fates of the captives.

With respect to my proceeding to Bokhara as a private traveller, he said the attempt would be madness, I should be either murdered as a spy, or confined as a madman. Could I, however, obtain the sanction of the government, and enter Bokhara in my uniform, I should be received with kindness and distinction. He intended wearing his canonicals, and as a moolah (minister of religion), his sacred character would protect him. I communicated to the worthy Doctor the proposition I had made to Lord Aberdeen and its reception, at which he appeared much astonished. The Doctor said that with 500*l.* he could perform the journey. I told him that I had little doubt I should soon be able to place that sum at his command. Dr. Wolff was to proceed to Bruges, where he was assisting in the duties of the English Church, there to await a letter from me, on the receipt of which he would be prepared to start immediately on his mission.

My intention was myself to have despatched the Doctor to Bokhara. On consulting, however, some prudent friends, I was advised not to take upon myself so great a responsibility, that I ought

rather to appeal to the public, to have a public meeting, and that a decision of that meeting ought to determine whether the Doctor's proposition should be accepted or not.

To prepare the public mind I published a hasty pamphlet, in which I stated my reasons for disbelieving the reports of the death of the officers, my intention of despatching Dr. Wolff immediately to Bokhara, and requesting all persons interested in the affair to address me at the Army and Navy Club, or Athenæum. I received numerous letters containing the kindest advice, and offers of pecuniary assistance. The latter, however, I declined to receive until the expedition should be sanctioned by a public meeting, and a committee appointed.

To counteract the effect of my pamphlet, I imagine, the government published in the newspapers the statement of Saleh Mohammed of what a man had told him; and this statement was headed in large letters, MURDER OF COLONEL STODDART AND CAPTAIN CONOLLY; to this was appended a certificate that the narrator was a prepossessing young man, which was signed "Justin Shiel;" and as few people took the trouble of reading this very long statement, it was generally thought that Colonel Shiel certified to its truth, and that the question was settled.

This *coup diplomatique*, however, had no effect upon me. I advertised a public meeting to take place at the Crown and Anchor, to concert measures for despatching Dr. Wolff to Bokhara, in search of the two envoys, who had been abandoned by those whose duty it was to protect them. I took no measures whatever to insure a meeting. I did not solicit the attendance of a single friend, as I was determined that Dr. Wolff, who had so nobly devoted himself to the cause, should proceed to Bokhara; and my only object in calling the meeting was to have a committee appointed, which I knew would insure me the interview with the Secretary of State, which, as a private citizen, I had solicited in vain.

I took the chair on that occasion, wishing to take upon myself the whole responsibility.

The meeting was numerously attended; and I shall feel for ever grateful to those gentlemen who so kindly came forward on that occasion.

The following resolutions were passed unanimously:—

"Moved by J. S. Buckingham, Esq.; seconded by Colonel Humfrey,—

"1st. That in the uncertainty which exists respecting the life of Colonel Stoddart and

Captain Conolly, it is desirable to ascertain the real facts of the case.

"Moved by James Walker, Esq. F.R.S. President of the Institution of Civil Engineers; seconded by Dr. Burnes, brother of the late Sir Alexander Burnes,—

"2d. That a Committee be formed to communicate with the British Government on this subject; to send out immediately the Rev. Dr. Joseph Wolff to Bokhara, to ascertain the fate of Colonel Stoddart and Captain Conolly; and to take such measures as may be thought necessary.

"Moved by Captain W. S. Moorsom; seconded by Captain Nestor,—

"3d. That the following gentlemen do constitute such Committee, with power to add to their numbers; and that a subscription be now opened to obtain the requisite funds for accomplishing the object proposed.

"Major-General Sir Jeremiah Bryant, C.B.
Admiral Sir Edward Codrington, G.C.B.
J. S. Buckingham, Esq.
Major Agnew.
Lewis Tonna, Esq.
Sir Joseph Copley, Bart.
Captain W. S. Moorsom.
Colonel Humfrey.
Captain Downes, R.N.
Lieutenant Raper, R.N.
Captain Grover.

"(Signed) JOHN GROVER, *Chairman.*

"It was moved by J. S. Buckingham, Esq.; and seconded by Captain Moorsom,—

"That the thanks of the Meeting be given to Captain Grover, for the great zeal and humanity with which he has brought the subject before the public, and for the manner he has filled the Chair this day."

Of this committee I was chosen president, and in that character, for the second time, requested the honour of an audience of the Secretary of State; an answer was immediately returned; and on the 26th September the committee had the desired interview.

We were most graciously received. I informed his Lordship what steps the Committee had already taken, and was about informing him of the object of the present interview, when he interrupted me by saying, that he was prepared to grant us every assistance. That he must confess he had been so satisfied of the truth of Saleh Mohammed's statement, that he had thought it his duty to apply to Sir Robert Peel in order that a pension might be granted to the nearest relative of Colonel Stoddart, and that Her Majesty had not only given her consent, but had commanded him to express to the family her deep sympathy and condolence on the melancholy occasion, and that the pension had been

withheld on account of the doubts that had been expressed.

His Lordship said, he was happy to repeat the assurances he had already given, that he would second by all means in his power the efforts of the Committee in despatching Dr. Wolff; and, for this purpose, he would not only provide the necessary passports, but would furnish Dr. Wolff with letters to Colonel Shiel, to whom, also, he would give instructions to render him every possible assistance.

Before leaving, I told his Lordship that it would be satisfactory to the Committee to know if the mission of Dr. Wolff would interfere in any way with any measures government might have the intention of adopting for the relief of Colonel Stoddart and Captain Conolly.

His Lordship said: in no way whatever; and that he could assure us, that no one would more sincerely rejoice than himself, should our benevolent efforts be crowned with success.

We were all delighted with this interview; and I was so completely satisfied of his Lordship's sincerity, that I then for the first time felt sorry that I had handled his Lordship so roughly in my "Appeal." I went to the publisher's, and committed to the flames all that was left of the impression of that pamphlet.

I must here state that his Lordship's assistance surpassed his promises, and far exceeded our expectations; and any one who has read what I have published from time to time in the newspapers will have observed that I have taken every opportunity of expressing publicly to his Lordship the gratitude I sincerely felt for his Lordship's kind assistance as long as I was satisfied of his sincerity. However, I will not anticipate, except to relate one circumstance.

At the commencement of the last session of Parliament, I received a communication from a member of parliament who was desirous of bringing the "Stoddart and Conolly" affair before the House, and he wished to know if I would afford him information for that purpose.

My reply was, that this was not a party question; that I felt too grateful to the Earl of Aberdeen for the kind assistance he was now affording me, to aid in bringing forward a discussion that might be embarrassing to the administration; that unless it could be distinctly shewn that the agitation of the subject could forward the release of my friend, which was my only object, I declined any further correspondence on the subject.

CHAPTER IV.

Dr. Wolff's First Interview with the Committee — His Instructions — Sails from Southampton — Account sent from Constantinople by Dr. Wolff — Sir Stratford Canning — Mr. Layard — Author's Private Letter to Lord Aberdeen about the Ransom of Prisoners — Author's Letter to Dr. Wolff — Substance of Reports — Letter to Lord Aberdeen — Count de Médem's Despatch — Colonel Shiel's Despatch — Comments. 75 to 95

CHAPTER IV.

On the 3d October, Dr. Wolff had his first interview with the Committee, and I then gave him, according to my promise, a check upon my private banker for 500*l.*

Dr. Wolff expressing a desire publicly to take leave of his friends, it was resolved that a public meeting should be held on the 11th, at the Hanover Square Rooms.

Major-General Sir Jeremiah Bryant, C.B. presided on that occasion, when Dr. Wolff gave an interesting account of his previous journey to Bokhara.

The Committee then drew up the following instructions for Dr. Wolff's guidance, and a copy was sent to the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, who sent Dr. Wolff a passport without expense.

"DR. WOLFF'S INSTRUCTIONS.

"The Committee appointed at a public meeting held in London on the 7th September, 1843, to take measures

for immediately despatching the Rev. Joseph Wolff, D.D. LL.D. to Bokhara, to ascertain the fate of Colonel Stoddart and Captain Conolly, have drawn up the following memoranda for the reverend Doctor's guidance.

"The Committee recommend that Dr. Wolff should direct his endeavours to two points.

"To obtain certain intelligence of the state or fate of these two officers, and if they should be still in captivity, and an opportunity should offer, to obtain or negotiate their release.

"The Committee do not think it advisable to lay down for him any precise plan of operation, not only because unforeseen circumstances might disturb any preconcerted plan, but also because his experience on the spot might suggest steps which could not have been anticipated.

"Her Majesty's Minister of Foreign Affairs having granted passports and letters to the Mission, and having stated that Her Majesty's Resident at Teheran is instructed to render every assistance at his command, the Committee recommend Dr. Wolff so to arrange his route, as to communicate at the earliest period possible with Her Majesty's envoy at Teheran, whose local information may be of the greatest importance.

"Dr. Wolff will communicate with the Committee at every opportunity.

"Dr. Wolff having ascertained the fate of the captives, or having placed them in safety at Teheran, will consider his mission terminated. And the Committee recommend him to the care of Divine Providence in his benevolent undertaking.

"JOHN GROVER,
"Captain Unattached,
"*London*, 10*th Oct.* 1843. "President of the Committee."

It was with feelings of great anxiety and uneasiness, that I witnessed the departure of Dr. Wolff on a mission so exceedingly perilous, and for the advance of which I had taken so active a part. Had Dr. Wolff's mission been recognised by the British government, I should not have had the least anxiety for his safety. Before leaving London I had many anxious discussions with him about the dangers he was about to undergo; and my conscience was troubled at allowing this good man to do what I certainly would not have undertaken myself without the sanction of government. Dr. Wolff always met my objections by saying,—that the cases were not parallel. That were I to undertake the journey without the letters that had been refused me, I should never return—that the assistance Lord Aberdeen had offered, to induce me to go as an innocent traveller, would only have hastened my destruction—that his (Dr. Wolff's) sacred character and dress would be his protection—that he had numerous acquaintances at Bokhara, where he was well known—that I ought not to be uneasy—that I ought to recollect, that I did not seek him, but that he sought me, by his published letter addressed to all the officers of the British army—that I ought, also, to think of my friend, Colonel Stoddart, to think of his anxious state of suffering,

from which we were endeavouring to rescue him—that he had often heard me say, that when I was performing a duty I never considered the consequences, and this was the time to apply that maxim. These arguments, in some degree, allayed my anxiety; but the calm cheerfulness that I witnessed in Lady Georgiana Wolff and her son tended more than all the worthy Doctor's pious arguments to tranquillise my mind.

Any stranger on witnessing the departure of Dr. Wolff would have thought he was merely taking a trip to the Isle of Wight. A more striking illustration of the effects of true Christianity I certainly never had the happiness to witness; and how sensibly did I feel my own inferiority at that trying moment.

The only result I expected from Dr. Wolff's mission was, that he might accidentally, by his intercourse with the Jews and others at Bokhara, obtain some clue to the fate of our friends. I expected every art would be employed to induce the Doctor to believe that they were dead: and I knew, that should Colonel Stoddart be alive and at liberty, that he would refuse to sneak away from Bokhara like a thief, and that he would remain until he was officially ordered to leave his post.

On the 14th of October I accompanied Dr.

Wolff and his family to Southampton, and saw him start on his interesting voyage on board the Iberia.

Dr. Wolff's departure was a most affecting scene. There was no weeping or wailing. Neither Lady Georgiana nor the Doctor's son shed a single tear. They, and the pious Doctor's friends, knew he was performing a sacred duty; fulfilling the will of his Heavenly Master. They felt that it was a moment of exultation that Dr. Wolff should be chosen to fulfil this sacred duty.

I hastened on shore that the Doctor's last moments with his family might be undisturbed. Having taken leave of his family, the Doctor called me, and I returned on board the ship. He then gave me a blessing in such a solemn manner, that the sailors left off their work, and all heads were uncovered. The Doctor then fell upon my neck and kissed me.

On the 4th of December I received the following interesting communication from Sir Stratford Canning, the British minister at Constantinople, dated November 13, 1843:—

"I rejoice more than I can express, to hear that an Englishman named Stoddart, was alive at Bokhara, five or six months ago, when the individual from whom this was obtained left that city. This encouraging intelligence has been obtained through Mr. Layard, to whom I refer

you for the particulars, which will best enable you to judge whether we are too sanguine in founding an additional hope upon the circumstances."

The following is Mr. Layard's account:—

"*To the Rev. Dr. Wolff.*

"Reverend Sir,—I have much pleasure in informing you that I have received additional accounts of Messrs. Stoddart and Conolly; and that all these accounts tend to prove that those gentlemen are still alive. As far as Colonel Stoddart is concerned, I do not now feel a doubt but that he was alive four or five months ago. I have learned to-day that a native of Bokhara, who quitted the city about five months ago, states, that he was well acquainted with an Englishman there, who had turned Mussulman. That he enjoyed perfect liberty, and was not only permitted to live in the city, but was furnished with money, and all necessaries, by the principal people of Bokhara. That shortly before he (my informant) quitted Bokhara, this Englishman stated to the King that he had property in his native country which he desired to sell, and to invest the proceeds in property at Bokhara, requesting permission to proceed to England. That this permission was readily granted; and the Englishman was about to leave, with the promise of returning to Bokhara, after making the necessary arrangements. On being asked the name of this Englishman, he wrote on a slip of paper, after having endeavoured to explain *vivâ voce*, Astordis or Stordas.

"It must be remembered, that the person through whom these inquiries were made was ignorant both of

the name of Colonel Stoddart, and of all circumstances connected with his imprisonment, &c. The person who furnished this account is unable to state what became of Conolly; but he has no reason to believe that he was put to death. I have already informed you, that I have ascertained from persons who quitted Bokhara above a year ago, that both these gentlemen were then alive. All the accounts I have received agree in this one respect; and, although I have inquired indirectly of many natives of Bokhara, *not one* has yet stated that either has been put to death. Is it, therefore, still credible, that a public execution should have taken place unknown to some of the principal persons of the city?

"The information given above has been obtained through my friend Riza Kooli Mïrza, who kindly undertook to see the Bokharees for me. Should you desire to hear the prince's story, you will be able to find him in a quarter of Constantinople, called Ah-Serai, in the house of one Kassim Aga, near the Kulluk or guard-house. If you will mention my name to him, I feel sure he will be happy to give you every information; but I still take the liberty of suggesting, that it will be prudent not to make any direct inquiries of the Bokharees at present.

"I have the honour to be,
"Reverend Sir,
"Your obedient servant,
"A. H. LAYARD.

"*Buyuk-dere, Nov.* 13, 1843."

In this statement there can be no doubt of the identity, the name being as distinctly written as the Persian character will admit of.

The moment I communicated this letter to the Earl of Aberdeen, I was sent for, and received his lordship's hearty congratulations.

Accounts were now received from all quarters, collected from people recently arrived from Bokhara, which strengthened our hopes that Dr. Wolff's mission would have a successful issue. These *all* agreed in one point, that no public execution had taken place.

At the end of November I received a letter from Dr. Wolff, dated Smyrna, 1st October, giving an interesting account of his voyage. In this letter, the Doctor desires me to apply to the Earl of Aberdeen, to know if "government authorise him to pay a ransom for Colonel Stoddart, Captain Conolly, or other British officers that might be found at Bokhara."

Now, it occurred to me that such an application might be embarrassing to Lord Aberdeen: as a compliance with the Doctor's request would in some measure be a recognition of his mission, which I knew his lordship was desirous of avoiding, while at the same time, to refuse an authority to pay a ransom for two British officers imprisoned while representing their sovereign in the sacred character of envoys, in case they should return to their country, would appear so harsh, cruel, unna-

tural, and revolting, that I determined to rescue his lordship from being empaled on one of the horns of this very awkward dilemma.

Still it was my duty to communicate to Lord Aberdeen Dr. Wolff's anxious request; and I therefore addressed to his lordship the following private letter:—

"*Private.*

"*Army and Navy Club,*
"*1st Dec.*, 1843.

"My Lord,—In a letter I have received from the Rev. Dr. Wolff, dated Smyrna, 1st ultimo, he desires me to apply to your lordship to know, whether he is authorised to pay a ransom for Lieut.-Colonel Stoddart, Captain Conolly, or any other British officers he may find in captivity at Bokhara.

"Now, as such a question might possibly be embarrassing to government, I have taken the liberty of addressing your lordship *privately*, and beg your lordship will not think it necessary to reply, nor even to acknowledge the receipt of the present communication.

"It may be a satisfaction to your lordship to know, that previous to Dr. Wolff's departure, I authorised him to draw upon my private funds to a limited extent, for the ransom of any British prisoners he might find at Bokhara. I also wrote to him to the same effect, through the Foreign Office, by the last mail.

"I have the honour of sending herewith (extracted from the official returns) a list of all officers returned 'doubtful,' in the late disastrous retreat from Cabul;

some of whom may now be languishing in captivity at Bokhara.

"I have the honour to be,
"My Lord,
"Your Lordship's obdt. servant,
"JOHN GROVER.

"*The Right Hon. the Earl of Aberdeen,*
Secretary of State."

To Dr. Wolff I wrote in reply:—

"It might be embarrassing to government to apply about the ransom of the prisoners as you wished. Draw upon me for *any amount* that may be wanted, I will provide the means."

Previous to this time Dr. Wolff was only authorised to draw upon my private fortune to the extent of 300*l.* As, however, the safety of my friend appeared now nearly certain, I withdrew the limit.

I have published this correspondence to shew the public how anxious I have been to avoid occasioning the least embarrassment to government, and beg the reader kindly to bear this in mind, when he reads an account of the subsequent proceedings of government in the course of this narrative.

That I was right in supposing that I was extricating the Earl of Aberdeen from a dilemma, I need only cite, as a proof, the fact, that his Lord-

ship did *not* acknowledge the receipt of my letter of the 1st December.

The committee now received from the Secretary of State a long state paper of eighteen folio pages, entitled "Substance of Reports." I was puzzled to make out the object of this long communication, when I saw it published the following morning in "The Times;" and I immediately wrote the following letter to Lord Aberdeen; and I will here observe that, at an interview with which his Lordship honoured me a few days subsequently, he admitted that the statement was published with his sanction.

"*Army and Navy Club*, 8*th Feb.* 1844.

"My Lord,

"I take the liberty of informing your Lordship that I have never communicated to the public any part of the despatches which your Lordship has done me the honour of communicating to me; that the extracts from despatches which your Lordship so kindly sent me last week I only shewed to one person; therefore, when I saw that statement verbatim in 'The Times' this morning, I was certain that it must have come from the Foreign Office, and that your Lordship was desirous of directing public attention to the matter. Now, as in that statement, facts and inferences are so curiously blended together, that it is not easy for unreflecting people to separate them, I have taken the liberty of supplying a few more facts, and have sent to the evening papers; Mr. Wood's 'Despatch'

(omitting the allusion to Colonel Stoddart having become a Mussulman), and the concluding sentence of M. Ghersi's. This your Lordship will perceive I have done without any special pleading; for I am quite sure, that special pleading can never bring a dead man to life, although it may place a living one in his grave.

"Since the first interview with which your Lordship honoured the committee I have never published a word of comment on passing events, except, indeed, my letter to Lord John Russell in the 'Herald' of Monday last—his Lordship offered so fair a mark that really I could not resist it.

"Trusting your Lordship will not disapprove of the publication of this afternoon.

"I have the honour to be, &c.

"JOHN GROVER.

"*To Lord Aberdeen.*"

On the 16th February, 1844, in consequence of a note from the Earl of Aberdeen I went to the Foreign Office, and was shewn a letter from Lord Stuart de Rothesay, containing a communication from Count Nesselrode, in which it was stated that the Russian Government had received despatches from the Count de Médem, Minister at Teheran, dated $\frac{1}{2}\frac{7}{7}$ December, stating that an ambassador had arrived at that city from Bokhara; and that he frankly told him (Count de Médem) that Colonel Stoddart and Captain Conolly had both been put to death; the first for having

attempted to communicate with his friends at Cabul; the second, for having spoken in favour of the King of Kokan.

The following day this statement was published by government in the newspapers.

I now thought the affair settled, and wrote to Lord Aberdeen to that effect; also to Lord Fitzroy Somerset, who had taken so much interest in the affair.

On the 2d March, about a fortnight after my last visit, I received another summons from the Foreign Office; and on my arrival I was shewn a despatch that had been received on the 28th February from Lieut.-Colonel Shiel, the British Envoy at Teheran.

Colonel Shiel states that *he* had had an interview with the ambassador from Bokhara, who informed him that it had been *reported* that Colonel Stoddart and Captain Conolly had been publicly executed, but that it was *not true—no such execution had taken place!*

Now, on the following day I looked anxiously in the newspapers, expecting to see the publication of this interesting despatch.

I looked in vain. It appeared that the government only published intelligence that tended to

confirm the opinion, which they had adopted, that these officers had ceased to exist!

Count de Médem's despatch was published in all the newspapers within forty-eight hours after it reached the Foreign Office. The official despatches of our *own minister*, from the same place, flatly and distinctly contradicting the Russian account, and communicating to us the gratifying intelligence that these unfortunate envoys had *not been put to death* — this important despatch has *never been published from that time to this.*

What are we to think of this? Is this fair? —is this honest? I plainly inform the government that I consider it neither one nor the other.

Without venturing absolutely to say that the government wished for the destruction of these brave but unfortunate envoys, I have not the slightest hesitation in saying that they wished to establish a belief of their death in the minds of the public; and, in my opinion, the one is quite as wicked as the other. This suppression of intelligence, by checking exertion, might absolutely occasion the destruction, of which they wished to establish a belief.

About this time, an account appeared in the "Bombay Times" that two men, *Moolla Moosa* and

Moolla Ibrahim, who had paid great attention to the Cabul captives, and were, therefore, well known as men of respectability, had just arrived from Bokhara. These men state that Stoddart and Conolly were in confinement in a fort behind the King's residence, where no one was allowed to see them except the guard who provided them with food. This information was obtained from Mirza Junaid, the priest, who knows all that passes in the King's household, and when *Stoddart was sick himself attended on him.* These men are perfectly satisfied that Stoddart and Conolly have never been put to death, *and they believe them to be alive at this moment.*

Now it is very extraordinary that we have received similar accounts from people, inhabitants of Bokhara, who have been hundreds, nay, thousands, of miles apart when they have made these depositions; and, therefore, collusion was quite out of the question.

The above statement may be true or false. My reason for laying it before the reader is to call his attention to the fact, that this statement was only copied by one English paper, "The Morning Post." And the editor adds this note, "Of course the editor of the 'Bombay Times' was ignorant of the official accounts which we have already published

of the fate of these unfortunate officers."—*Editor, Morning Post.*

In the "Delhi Gazette" of the 14th August, 1844, the following paragraph appeared, which was not copied into any English paper:—

"We had hoped to have heard before this date direct from Dr. Wolff, and of the certainty of the fates of Stoddart and Conolly; but, as yet, nothing that can absolutely be depended upon as to their ultimate fate has transpired. A correspondent, who takes more than usual interest in Dr. Wolff's pilgrimage, has revived this painful subject; and, although not inclined to believe in the existence of Conolly, still hopes that Stoddart may yet be found. His hopes are founded upon the fact that a Cabul merchant, residing in Bokhara, whose name is in our possession, has written to his agent in Kashmeer, so late as February last, in answer to urgent inquiries as to the fate of our countrymen, that Conolly had *died* in prison, and suffering much distress, and that, at his death, Colonel Stoddart was removed by the King of Bokhara to the 'Urk,' or citadel; that, for six months, he had tried every means to ascertain his fate, but that he had not succeeded.

"These are but slight hopes, indeed; and we must make up our minds, we fear, to the worst. We have directed our agents in Cabul to use every effort to find out something relating to the fate of the unfortunates, but hitherto all has been surmise."

I certainly might myself have published Colonel Shiel's despatch from memory, had I thought fit, as

Lord Aberdeen gave me a general authority to publish every thing that was communicated to me. As, however, Dr. Wolff was now so far advanced that public opinion in England could not in any way affect him, much as I was disgusted with the conduct of the British government, I thought it better to wait for Dr. Wolff's version of the affair, which reached me about three weeks after. The Doctor says:—

"Count de Médem told me yesterday that when the ambassador of Bokhara arrived here, he sent a man on purpose to inquire after the state of Colonel Stoddart and Captain Conolly, to which he replied, that he believed them to be dead, but *he had not seen them, nor has any one else.*"

This is very different from the account transmitted from St. Petersburg.

Dr. Wolff then gives an account of *his* interview with the Bokhara ambassador, when he denied, "*in toto, the account of the execution.*"

By the November Mail we had an account of a man just arrived from Bokhara at Bombay, who makes a solemn deposition confirmatory of the above. Now this has not been copied into any English paper, the editors being satisfied that Stoddart and Conolly had ceased to exist.

Thus the reader will see that, by establishing an

opinion of the death of these unfortunate men, the circulation of intelligence was prevented.

Let us suppose for a moment an officer commanding an outpost at one of our frontier cantonments on the Sutledge.

This gentleman is leisurely occupied discussing his tiffin; a serjeant enters, and informs him that a wretched man has arrived, who has not the least appearance of a European; he is covered with rags, filth, vermin, and sores, and yet says he is an English Colonel escaped from Bokhara, and that his name is Stoddart.

Lieutenant Easy (after a long yawn), "Why, what the devil is all this nonsense you tell me about Colonel Stoddart? This is, indeed, a capital joke! What an impudent impostor this rascal must be! Colonel Stoddart and Captain Conolly were both publicly executed some time ago. Hand me that 'Army List' in the red cover. Let me see! Ah, true enough;—here it is! Page 95. 'Deaths.—Lieut.-Col. Stoddart, H.P. Royal Staff Corps, Bokhara, Persia. 17th June, 1842.' Well, there can be no mistake about that, although these officials are a little out in their geography, certainly. Bokhara in Persia! But, however, there can be no doubt that this Colonel Stoddart is officially defunct; therefore, this fellow must be a spy. Let him have

a good 'cobbing' with a gun-sling, see him safe on the other side of the Sutledge, tell him to return from whence he came, and should he be found lurking about the cantonments, let him be hung without ceremony."

Such, seriously, might be the effect of giving credit to a *report* of a man's death. And this *official* announcement of the death of a brave officer was merely based upon a report—a report furnished by a regular scoundrel, as has been since proved, and for furnishing which this fellow received 3000 rupees.

Now, really, for my part, I would rather lose my time in endeavouring to restore animation to a corpse than run the slightest risk of allowing the vital spark to expire for want of a little care and exertion.

So do they not think in Downing Street.

CHAPTER V.

The King of Khiva tells Captain Abbott why Colonel Stoddart was kept in Captivity—The Author's Opinion—Dr. Wolff's Official Letter from Bokhara—Author's Case compared to Dr. Wolff's—Interview with Lord Aberdeen—Author proposes a Second Time to go to Bokhara—Correspondence on the subject—Letter from the Viceroy of Khorassaun—Revue de Paris—The Nayib. 9760124

CHAPTER V.

I HAVE often been asked what could have been the King of Bokhara's motive for imprisoning Colonel Stoddart. He, himself, says, he considered the Colonel as a spy. In Captain Abbott's account of his mission to Khiva, he gives the opinion of the sovereign of that country on the subject; and, as the opinion of that intelligent officer may be interesting to the reader, I here insert a few extracts from his interesting work.

I find the following at page 36, Vol. I. :—

"Colonel Stoddart's old servant also accompanied us, following me some distance after I had taken leave of the Beeg. I fell into company with him, and found it to be his firm conviction that the imprisonment of Colonel Stoddart was owing to a letter written by the Vuzier Yar Muhummeed, to the Ummeer of Bokhara.

"This man has since visited Bokhara, with the view of effecting Colonel Stoddart's release.

"His opinion jumps with a conviction I have long felt. It is well known that terms of defiance passed between Colonel Stoddart and the Vuzier, which the latter

was the last man in the world to forget or forgive. An outward reconciliation had taken place, but could but serve to inflame, by suppressing the resentment of such a fiend as Yar Muhummeed.

"It would appear that the Vuzier, in addition to his letter to the Ummeer, sent a man of his own in company with Colonel Stoddart; and to this man's advice is attributed all the evil consequences that fell upon Colonel Stoddart, whom he had persuaded to believe him an attached follower."

I find, however, in page 89, the opinion of the Khaun of Khiva, which shews more distinctly why the Khaun of Bokhara should detain Colonel Stoddart.

The conversation between the Khaun and Captain Abbott is as follows:—

"'Are you friends or enemies of Bokhara?'

"'We sent an ambassador to Bokhara, to offer the Ummeer friendship. He was afterwards to have proceeded, I believe, to Khiva, with similar offers to your majesty; but the Ummeer, violating the laws of nations, and the rights of hospitality, seized and imprisoned him. Such an act, unless speedily redressed, may bring the vengeance of my government upon Bokhara. Your majesty must have influence with the Ummeer, and would do an important benefit to the Mousulman world, in exerting it for the liberation of Colonel Stoddart. For the British are extremely reluctant to enter into war with any of the Moslem states, their natural allies.'

"'I am on terms of defiance; he will not listen to me.'

"'But his ambassador was lately at Khiva.'

"'He departed without obtaining his object. The Ummeer is mad.'

"'Your majesty is a friend and ally of the King of Kokaun. If both yourself and that monarch should urge the release of Colonel Stoddart, the Ummeer would not dare refuse.'

"'The Ummeer thinks, from the pains you take for Colonel Stoddart's release, that he is some very great man; and, as he fears you will some day molest *him*, detains him to exchange for some city, or some high ransom. Would your government give any high sum for his release?'

"'My queen has thousands of subjects the equals in birth and rank to Colonel Stoddart. Had Colonel Stoddart been taken in war, a ransom might probably be thought of. But he was the Ummeer's guest, and the representative of my king at the time of his seizure. The insult, if not redressed, may be avenged. So far from the Ummeer gaining a city in exchange for Colonel Stoddart, were he to ask only a single rupee, the British Government would refuse the demand with scorn. The pains we have taken for Colonel Stoddart's release, proceed from our reluctance to war with any of the states of Islaum. But for this reluctance, we had long ago sent a couple of thousand soldiers to drive the Ummeer out of his kingdom.'"

At page 169, Vol. I. I find the following:—

"At my next audience, the Khaun Huzurut informed

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me, that the Ummeer of Bokhara had sent a decided negative to his (the Khaun's) two several remonstrances for the release of Colonel Stoddart. The reply of the Ummeer was,—

"'You have one English Eelchir, what would you do with another? Do you grudge me one?'

"I replied, that I deeply regretted the Ummeer's insanity; but that the Khaun Huzurut's friendly attention to the request of my government could not be impaired by the conduct of the Ummeer, but was as precious as if crowned with the desired success.

"I begged in the name of my government to offer his majesty the warmest thanks."

My opinion is, that having imprisoned Colonel Stoddart in the first instance, on an erroneous though perfectly justifiable suspicion, the King of Bokhara made sure that a nation like Great Britain would certainly punish such a degrading insult offered to an ambassador, and that it would be made a pretext for depriving him of his throne. Should he, therefore, release Colonel Stoddart, that officer would undoubtedly return with the invading force; and his knowledge of the country would render resistance useless, and the conquest certain. The reader will have observed at page 33, that the King of Kokan was not disposed to allow Captain Conolly to proceed to Bokhara, with which country he was at war, fearing that he might aid

Nasr Ullah; and, when he granted Captain Conolly's request, he forced him to take a circuitous route, that he might not observe the state of the country through which the Bokhara army would have to advance to reach Kokan.

On the 7th of July, 1844, I received the following letter from Dr. Wolff:—

"*Official.*

"*Bokhara, May* 5, 1844.

"*To Captain Grover.*

"Sir,—I write this letter in the house of *Nayeb Samet Khan*, the chief of the artillery, and the arsenal of his Majesty the King of Bokhara, a sincere and excellent friend of the British nation, but in the presence, also, of his majesty the Ummeer's mahram (private chamberlain); and I write this letter officially, by order of the King of Bokhara, to whom I give a translation of the letter; and, therefore, confine myself only to the *most necessary topics*, without comment, and without any observation from my part.

"Firstly, on the 29th of April, the king stated to me by medium of the above-named Nayeb, and in the presence of *Mullah Kasem* the king's *mahram* (private chamberlain), *that he had put to death* in the month of *Sarratan*, 1259,* Colonel Stoddart and Captain Conolly. The first had been put to death, firstly, on account of his hav-

* I have the highest authority in this country for stating, that the month of Sarratan, 1259, means July, 1843.

ing treated royalty with the greatest disrespect on different occasions; secondly, that he had turned Mussulman, and then returned to the Christian faith; thirdly, that he had promised to get letters from England, and fourteen months had elapsed, without receiving any answer, though the king had erected *Japar Khanas* (post-houses) on his account. And with regard to Conolly, that he had been put to death for having induced the Khans of Khiva and Kokan to wage war against the King of Bokhara, &c. His majesty has given me permission to leave Bokhara on the 9th of May, *i. e.*, Friday next.

"From Meshed I shall write every thing more fully.

"I am, Sir,

"Your humble and obedient Servant,

"JOSEPH WOLFF,

"Mullah of England.

"My dear Grover,—Pray tell Lady Georgiana that there is not the *least* fear for *my life*, and that I shall write to her very soon.

"JOSEPH WOLFF."

Many persons, I doubt not, when they read the account of Dr. Wolff's imprisonment at Bokhara, thought it a sufficient justification of the Government for refusing me the permission I asked; imagining that I should have shared the same fate. The cases, however, are very different. Dr. Wolff went to Bokhara as an *innocent traveller*, thinking

his sacred character of Moolah would protect him. As an *innocent traveller*, he was imprisoned. Colonel Stoddart and Captain Conolly were disowned by their government, and proclaimed as *innocent travellers*; for that reason, says the King of Bokhara, they met the fate they deserved.

The Under-Secretary of State tempted me with the offer of all the aid at the command of the Foreign Office, if I would proceed to Bokhara as an *innocent traveller*. I told him I wanted no assistance whatever from government, merely a sufficient recognition of my mission, to shew that I was not a spy, and an authority to claim Stoddart, without which I knew he would not leave Bokhara had he the permission. This was refused.

On receiving the preceding letter from Dr. Wolff, I proceeded to Downing Street, and was honoured by the Earl of Aberdeen with an interview. His Lordship read the letter with great attention. I was about to speak to his Lordship on the danger of the Doctor's position, and of the means that might be employed to save him, when we were disturbed by the entrance of a gentleman, and I therefore addressed to his Lordship the following letter:—

"*Army and Navy Club,*
"*August 1st*, 1844.

"My Lord,

"At the interview with which your Lordship honoured me on Saturday last, I was about to say a few words on the outrage committed by the King of Bokhara, when we were interrupted by (I believe) the Chancellor of the Exchequer. I therefore presume to submit the following observations to your Lordship's consideration.

"An opinion appears to prevail that the King of Bokhara is beyond the reach of our vengeance. I think, however, that I shall be able to shew that he may be reached and punished without difficulty.

"Fearing, however, that at the present day the question of expediency must be first discussed, I will endeavour to establish that point.

"There is no principle in diplomacy more generally admitted than this—that the greatest injury, the greatest insult, a nation can suffer, is the murder or imprisonment of an ambassador. All jurists are agreed on this point, and I think no one would dare even to hint that it would be 'expedient' that the British nation should submit to this degradation.

"After the Cabul disaster it was not thought expedient to attempt to punish the murderer of our envoy, but, rather to save our rupees, abandon the prisoners to their wretched fate, and sacrifice the honour of the British army.

"Now, my Lord, had this disgraceful decision been acted upon, I have no hesitation in saying the result would have been the ultimate oss of our Indian empire.

"Have the rupees Genera. Pollock's expedition cost

the nation been advantageously employed? I am sure your Lordship will say, Had the cost been tenfold, the murder of the envoy ought not to have passed unavenged.

"Assuming, therefore, that it is expedient to maintain the national honour, I will endeavour to shew how, in my humble opinion, this may be achieved.

"I put the employment of a British force out of the question.

"Your Lordship is aware that both Khiva and Khokan are at war with Bokhara.

"I had the honour of submitting to your Lordship a letter from the Asoof-ood-Dowlah, uncle to the King of Persia, Governor of Khorassaun, from which it appears that he had assembled between Merve and Meshed the most powerful tribes of Saraks, Mahal, Merve, &c., and that he was ready to march to Bokhara to punish the Ameer, with the permission of the Shah, if he had the authority of Great Britain.

"The King of Bokhara being such a horrible tyrant, and considered by his subjects as a madman, they might possibly reflect upon the fate of Cabul, and save us the trouble of deposing him.

"Now, the plan I propose is this: England should proclaim to all nations her intention of punishing the Ameer of Bokhara for the murder or imprisonment of her ambassador, and to set at liberty all English, Russian, and Persian slaves, the number of which is enormous.

"To carry this resolution into effect, your Lordship will only have to say the word to put a Persian army in motion. This army should be accompanied by a British

officer as Her Majesty's Commissioner; and he ought to have one or two squadrons of British dragoons, or Company's cavalry, and a few light guns as an escort, which would give an English character to the expedition. In case of success, of which I can entertain no doubt, England would retrieve her honour; should the expedition fail, of course the blame would lie with the Persians.

"The expedition should be directed against the Ameer alone, our policy requiring that Bokhara should be strengthened rather than weakened.

"I trust your Lordship will not consider me presumptuous in offering these remarks. At all events, I feel that I am merely doing my duty. And, in conclusion, I beg leave, through your Lordship, to make a tender of my dutiful services to Her Majesty, to be employed in any way in this glorious enterprise, although I am quite sure your Lordship will find many officers quite as willing and better qualified than I am.

"I have the honour to be,
"My Lord,
"Your Lordship's obedient,
"Humble Servant,
"JOHN GROVER,
"Captain Unattached.

"*The Right Hon.*
"*The Earl of Aberdeen,*
"*&c. &c. &c.*
"*Secretary of State.*

"P.S. I would send the escort dismounted from Bombay to Bushire, and purchase the horses in Persia."

The following answer was received:—

"*Mr. Addington to Captain Grover.*

"*Foreign Office,*
"*August 7th,* 1844.

"Sir,

"I am directed by the Earl of Aberdeen to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 1st inst., suggesting a plan for deposing the Ameer of Bokhara in retaliation for the execution of Lieut.-Colonel Stoddart and Captain Conolly, and offering your services to be employed in any way in the enterprise; and I am to state to you, in reply, that his Lordship is obliged to you for your offer. But notwithstanding the natural feeling of indignation and resentment which lead his Lordship to desire to see punishment inflicted on the author of so barbarous an act as the murder of Colonel Stoddart and Captain Conolly, he does not anticipate that he will have any occasion for troubling you to proceed to Bokhara in the manner which you point out.

"I am, Sir,
"Your most obedient, humble Servant,
"H. U. ADDINGTON."

My proposition having been thus refused by Her Majesty's government, I will state a few facts for the information of the public.

At this time I received a letter from the Viceroy of Khorassan, uncle to the King of Persia, which I was requested to deliver personally to the Duke of Wellington, and which, I have reason to believe,

recommended an attack upon the tyrant of Bokhara. I did not think it necessary to intrude myself upon the Duke, but placed the letter in the hands of Lord Fitzroy Somerset.

Dr. Wolff also wrote from Bokhara that he was received with shouts by the people whenever he appeared, as they thought he was to be followed by an English army.

In a private conversation he had with the Naib Abd-ool-Samet-Khan, the King's lieutenant, and commander of the troops, this man thus addressed him:—

"'The tyrant had the intention of putting me to death, and, for two years back, has not given me any salary, until he saw that he could not go on without me. And thus he acted even after I had taken Kokan; and, if he had been able to have taken Khiva, he certainly would have cut off my head.

"'Let the British government send an officer to Kokan, another to Kholoom, and another to Khiva. Let those Khans be induced to march against Bokhara, and let the British government give me twenty or thirty thousand tillahs, I am ready to support them. I know he intends to kill me; but, Inshallah (God willing), I will put him to death.'"

The above is an extract from Dr. Wolff's letter.

Dr. Wolff states that there are 200,000 Persians detained at Bokhara. This appears an incredible

number; but we well know that, in the reign of the Ameer Seyid, 40,000 families were transferred from Merve to the neighbourhood of Samarkand. These men are obliged outwardly to profess the Sunni faith, though, in their hearts, they continue Shiah. It will readily be imagined they would hail with joy any political change that would release them from the power of the Uzbegs. The whole of the regular troops in the kingdom of Bokhara amounts only to 500. Of these 450 are Persians; and their commander, *the Naib, whose conversation I have just reported, is also a Persian.*

At Bokhara the Jews are numerous, and possess great influence. They are well disposed to Christians, particularly to the English, who, they imagine, never visit Bokhara except as spies, and with evil intentions towards the Bokharians. All travellers speak with gratitude of the kindness they have received from this nation.

(The King of Bokhara might contrive to bring about 40,000 men into the field; but not one-third of these would be armed. These men wear helmets, carry shields, swords, and generally a long knife, a few have pistols, and matchlocks which are placed upon a rest when fired.)

I have taken these last details from Baron de Bode's translation of a Russian work on Bokhara,

just published, to make my proposition to Lord Aberdeen intelligible to the general reader.

The disgraceful insult that has been inflicted upon the British nation, by the imprisonment of her ambassadors, and the culpable negligence of the government concerning the fate of these men, has excited far more interest in France, Germany, and, I may say, on the Continent generally, than in England. This has not arisen from want of feeling in the nation, but from the difficulty an Englishman must have to believe in the possibility that the government could have acted as I have shewn it has done, and also from having adopted the opinion which the government was so anxious to inculcate, that these men were not ambassadors, were not diplomatic agents, but merely "*innocent travellers.*"

The French and German papers have contained long articles on this subject; and in the last number of the *Revue de Paris*, there is a notice which I extract, marking in *Italics* those passages to which I wish to direct the reader's special attention. I do not think it necessary to comment upon the arguments, or to point out the trifling inaccuracy in the facts, which are in the main correct, my object in printing it being merely to shew how great must be the interest felt by the French nation

on this subject, when we see so much valuable space in a periodical like the *Revue de Paris*, devoted to the fate of Stoddart and Conolly.

From the "Revue de Paris" for October, 1844. Vol. II. page 265.

"*Les Agens Anglais à Bokhara, et le Docteur Wolff.*

"L'ambition des czars, on n'en saurait douter, rêve de réunir un jour sous le même joug la plus grande partie de l'Europe et de l'Asie. Depuis bien des années, elle prépare sourdement les voies de cette œuvre immense. La guerre acharnée qu'elle soutient sans relâche pour la soumission du Caucase n'a probablement pas d'autre cause que le désir de s'ouvrir un libre passage dans la Perse, qui touche par un des côtés les plus vulnérables à l'Inde Anglaise. Ce serait la route la plus commode, la plus courte, et, en attendant la possession des riches provinces arrosées par l'Indus et le Gange, la Perse serait une proie capable de satisfaire pour quelque temps la Russie. Forcée par la resistance des Circassiens d'ajourner ces projets de conquête, elle pense à s'ouvrir une autre route à travers les déserts du Turkestan, qui baigne le rivage oriental de la mer Caspienne; cette route lui donnerait par le nord la clé de la péninsule Indienne. Les diverses expéditions dirigées contre le khanat de Khiva n'ont pas eu d'autre motif. La soumission de cette contrée n'aurait pas seulement l'avantage d'introduire les Russes au cœur même de ce que l'on appelle l'Asie centrale. Au milieu des populations belliqueuses qui l'habitent et que l'on évalue à plus de cinq millions d'âmes, ils trouveraient sans peine les élémens d'une nouvelle inva-

sion de barbares, pareille à celle des Mongols, à la suite de laquelle ils descendraient jusqu'aux rivages de la mer des Indes. Mais aucune des tentatives qu'elle a faites de ce côté n'a réussi à la Russie. La dernière, conduite par le général Perowsky en 1840, a révélé dans les déserts qui séparent Khiva de la mer Caspienne des difficultés insurmontables. Cependant la Russie ne se décourage pas. Sans renoncer à faire usage de la force ouverte, elle prépare par l'intrigue des voies à la conquête, et ce moyen est peut-être le plus sûr. Le gouvernement Anglais le sait bien, et ne méprise nullement les secrètes menées de cette puissance vraiment redoutable. Ce n'est pas tant pour soumettre des populations barbares qu'avait été entreprise la campagne de Caboul et de l'Afghanistan que pour les arracher à l'influence prochaine de la Russie. La compagnie des Indes sent parfaitement que de ce côté-là seulement se trouvent pour elle les plus graves dangers. Elle ne se fait aucune illusion à cet égard. Sa puissance ne sera sérieusement en péril que le jour où un peuple d'Europe prendra parti pour les Hindous contre elle. Ce rôle n'est possible qu'à la Russie. Aussi la seule présence d'un officier Cosaque, d'un aventurier Russe dans l'Afghanistan ou le Caboul, à Bokhara ou à Khiva, suffit pour mettre en émoi les trois présidences.

" Au commencement de 1838, une nombreuse caravane parut sur la frontière du territoire de Bokhara. Elle avait traversée sans encombre les steppes désertes qui bordent la rive occidentale de l'Oxus. Le bruit se répandit bientôt parmi les hordes pillardes du Turkestan qu'elle se composait de trois cents marchands Russes. Aussitôt Usbecks, Kirghizes, Khiviens, Tures, se pré-

parent de toutes parts à fondre sur cette riche proie. La caravane fut surprise dans une gorge étroite, et tous les voyageurs furent faits prisonniers avant qu'ils eussent eu le temps de se mettre en état de défense ; mais on ne tarda pas à découvrir dans ces paisibles marchands, qui avaient été vendus comme esclaves et dispersés dans l'intérieur du pays de Bokhara, des officiers Russes et Cosaques, se rendant ainsi déguisés auprès des khans et des émirs du Turkestan, chargés sans doute d'une mission de leur souverain. La nouvelle de cet étrange évènement arriva à Londres, et l'habile ministre qui dirigeait alors les affaires étrangères vit du premier coup tout le parti qu'on en pouvait tirer. Cela se passait dans le même temps que se préparaient les expéditions contre le Caboul et l'Afghanistan. Il comprit que la Russie avait prévu ce qui était arrivé, ce qui devait presque immanquablement arriver, et qu'elle était prête à en profiter. En effet, sous le prétexte de faire respecter ses sujets, le czar n'aurait pas manqué de faire avancer des troupes sur l'Oxus, et à la faveur de ce prétexte honorable il aurait pu conquérir des provinces importantes. Comme on le voit, la partie était bien engagée ; mais la Russie avait pour adversaire un plus fin joueur qu'elle.

" Aussitôt qu'il eut connaissance des détails de toute cette affaire, lord Palmerston donna ordre au ministre Anglais à Téhéran de choisir parmi les nombreux officiers attachés à sa suite un homme intrépide, et de l'envoyer immédiatement à Bokhara. Le choix tomba sur le colonel Stoddart, qui se rendit à la cour de l'émir et le décida à faire mettre sans retard en liberté les prétendus marchands Russes vendus comme esclaves. Toutefois le gouvernement Anglais n'avait sans doute pas seulement

pour but de déjouer les projets des Russes et de leur enlever tout prétexte d'agression. Le colonel Stoddart, qui avait été rejoint par un autre officier, le capitaine Conolly, ne regarda pas sa mission comme terminée après la délivrance des prisonniers Russes. Il demeura avec son compagnon auprès de l'émir Nasr-Ullah, dans quel dessein, on l'ignore. Quoiqu'il en soit, lord Palmerston avait réussi, par cette adroite manœuvre, à établir à Bokhara, à la cour même du plus puissant des petits souverains de l'Asie centrale, deux agens Anglais, chose impossible à obtenir jusque là, prêts à servir les intérêts de leur pays et à surveiller les intrigues de la Russie.

"Qu'il nous soit permis de faire ici une réflexion. *Comment ne pas envier à l'Angleterre ces agens intrépides qu'elle trouve toujours prêts à se dévouer à son service? Le mérite est d'autant plus grand, que le sort qui les attend dans ces périlleuses entreprises ne saurait être douteux.* Pour un Alexandre Burnes, dont le nom se répand dans tout le monde civilisé, combien de *victimes de ce patriotisme tombent obscurément, disparaissent sans laisser plus de traces que la paille que le vent emporte dans l'abîme! Ces dévouements sont sublimes; ils méritent d'être signalés à la juste admiration des peuples.*

"La situation du colonel Stoddart et du capitaine Conolly à la cour de l'émir de Bokhara varia selon les circonstances. Tantôt ils jouissaient de la plus grande faveur. Nasr-Ullah les consultait en toutes choses; tantôt dans la plus profonde disgrace, jetés dans un cachôt malsain, mourant presque de faim, ils étaient exposés aux outrages les plus odieux, et chaque jour menacés de perdre la vie. Ces vicissitudes dependaient des succès ou des

revers des troupes Anglaises sur les rives de l'Indus et dans l'Afghanistan. L'émir flattait ou maltraitait les agens de l'Angleterre en proportion de ses craintes et de sa confiance.

"Ce seul fait suffirait pour justifier la politique qu'avait suivie l'Angleterre en étendant sa domination dans l'Asie centrale. Les victoires des armes Anglaises répandaient la terreur jusque dans le cœur des princes les plus braves. Ils redoutaient le sort de leurs voisins, et peu s'en fallait qu'ils ne prévinssent la conquête par des offres prématurées de soumission. Nasr-Ullah, prince cruel, redouté également de ses sujets et de ses voisins, qui n'était monté sur le trône que par l'empoisonnement de son frère, était, comme tous les petits souverains de l'Orient, un adroit calculateur. Le bruit des malheurs de la famille de Dost-Mohammed lui faisait craindre pour sa sûreté, et il songeait déjà à se ménager la faveur des futurs conquérans de ses provinces par les caresses et les bons traitemens qu'il prodiguait aux deux agens Britanniques. Mais quand vinrent les désastres de l'armée Anglaise dans le Caboul, ces courageux représentans de la Grande-Bretagne furent de nouveau en butte aux rigueurs de l'émir, qui fut sur le point de les envoyer à la mort Nasr-Ullah était encore incertain du parti qu'il prendrait à leur égard, quand il apprit, à son grand étonnement, la seconde prise de Caboul et de Ghuzni. Le colonel Stoddart et son compagnon furent rendus à la liberté, et rien ne fut épargné pour effacer en eux tout ressentiment des outrages dont ils avaient été accablés. *A ce moment il leur aurait été permis de quitter Bokhara.* Les triomphes de leurs compatriotes eussent protégé leur retraite; cependant, par *un excès de zèle et de fidélité*, ils ne se crurent

pas libres d'abandonner *sans ordre le poste où les avait placés le service de leur pays.* Malheureusement, on les avait à-peu-près *oubliés;* ou les croyait morts depuis longtemps. L'armée Anglaise abandonna précipitamment le Caboul et l'Afghanistan, après avoir tiré une misérable vengeance des désastres passés, et les deux infortunés agens furent livrés sans défense, et sans même la protection lointaine du nom Anglais, aux caprices vindicatifs d'un despote barbare. *L'intervention de lord Ellenborough,* qu'ils informèrent de leur situation, *acheva de les perdre.* Se souvenant trop tard de ces sentinelles avancées, le gouverneur-général de l'Inde écrivit une lettre en leur faveur à Nasr-Ullah, les réclamant comme *d'innocens voyageurs,* et promettant que désormais ils s'abstiendraient d'entrer dans ses états. *Rien ne pouvait être plus maladroit.* L'émir savait très bien à quoi s'en tenir sur le véritable caractère de ses deux prisonniers ; mais armé *de cette lettre* de lord Ellenborough, il se crut autorisé à les traiter comme *des espions qui lui en avaient imposé.*

" C'est alors que l'agent Russe auprès de l'émir de Bokhara, le général Petrowsky, sollicita la mise en liberté de M. Stoddart et de M. Conolly, et demanda qu'il leur fût permit de se retirer où bon leur semblerait. Par cette intervention inattendue, la Russie prenait sa revanche du mauvais tour que lui avait joué lord Palmerston. Le général Petrowsky se débarrassait de deux surveillans incommodes, et, en se posant en protecteur des agens Anglais, il donnait à Nasr-Ullah une idée avantageuse de la puissance de son maître. C'est ce que comprit très bien M. Stoddart. Aussi, lorsqu'on lui offrit la liberté à la condition de le remettre entre le mains de l'agent Russe, *il refusa nettement,* et Nasr-Ullah s'enquérant des motifs de sa déter-

mination, le patriote Anglais répondit adroitement : '*Je ne doute pas que je ne sois bien traité par les Russes ; mais, lorsque mon gouvernement me réclamera que lui répondra votre altesse?*' Frappé de ce raisonnement, Nasr-Ullah rejeta ses prisonniers dans leur cachot et défendit au général Petrowsky de s'occuper d'eux davantage.

" Cependant M. Stoddart et M. Conolly avaient en Angleterre des compagnons d'armes qui ne les avaient pas oubliés. Un ami particulier du colonel Stoddart, le capitaine John Grover, alarmé sur le sort probable qui l'attendait, résolut de le délivrer. Pour réussir dans cette généreuse et difficile entreprise, il ne demandait à lord Aberdeen et à ses supérieurs que la permission de se rendre à Bokhara revêtu de son uniforme d'officier Anglais. Lord Aberdeen refusa de lui accorder cette autorisation ; *il ne voulut pas même recevoir le capitaine Grover,* et lui fit donner pour toute réponse que sans doute M. Stoddart et M. Conolly n'existaient plus depuis long-temps, et qu'il avait tort de s'inquiéter d'eux. Dès-lors M. Grover renonça à son projet, car c'eût été un acte de folie de s'aventurer sans caractère officiel au milieu de ces populations barbares.

" Sur ces entrefaites *Joseph Wolff, missionnaire Anglais et ministre de l'église établie,* annonça publiquement qu'il était prêt à partir pour Bokhara, si on lui fournissait les moyens d'entreprendre ce long et coûteux voyage. Voici pour quel motif le docteur Wolff se décidait à abandonner son pays, sa femme, son unique enfant, et se dévouait *à une mort presque certaine.* Le capitaine Conolly l'avait rencontré plusieurs années auparavant au milieu de l'Asie centrale dans le plus affreux dénouement et s'échappant de l'esclavage où l'avait réduit les hordes féroces

auxquelles il était allé porter les lumières de l'Evangile. Il l'avait secouru comme un frère et se l'était attaché par les liens de la plus vive reconnaissance. C'était cette dette que le docteur Wolff voulait acquitter en tentant d'arracher à son malheureux sort son ami et son bienfaiteur. Le capitaine Grover s'empressa de lui remettre 500 livres sterling (12,500 francs), somme à laquelle le docteur Wolff évaluait la depense du voyage. Cette noble conduite du missionnaire excita l'admiration générale. Aussitôt un comité se forma, composé d'officiers de l'armée Anglaise et de simples particuliers, qui s'engagèrent à fournir au docteur Wolff tout ce qui lui serait nécessaire. Le capitaine Grover fut forcé de reprendre ses 500 livres sterling : on lui permit seulement de coopérer à l'entreprise commune. Cela se passait à la fin du mois de Juin de l'année dernière.

" Le docteur Wolff se mit immédiatement en route. Il traversa la Méditerranée, la mer Noire avec la plus grande rapidité, debarqua à Trébizonde au commencement de l'hiver, et malgré la rigueur de la saison, se dirigea en toute hâte vers le terme de son voyage. Sur la route les bruits les plus contradictoires lui arrivaient de toutes partes. A Meshed, il découvrit un agent du colonel Stoddart, qui avait en châles et autres objets précieux, pour plus de 50,000 francs en dépôt, et qui, par un motif facile à comprendre, affirmait de la manière la plus positive que le colonel et son compagnon étaient morts depuis long-temps. L'ambassadeur Russe à Téhéran, M. le Comte de Médem, répandit le même bruit, tandis que le ministre Anglais près la cour de Perse, M. le colonel Shiel, assurait qu'ils étaient encore en vie. Les renseignements ne firent que précipiter le marche du

docteur Wolff. Cependant à mesure qu'il approchait de Bokhara, ses espérances et sa confiance diminuaient. Protégé par une escorte de Turcomans, il traversa sans encombre le désert et arriva enfin à la cour de Nasr-Ullah, où il apprit que le colonel Stoddart et le capitaine Conolly avaient été mis à mort par les ordres de l'émir.

"Telle était la substance de la première lettre de M. Wolff écrite de Bokhara. Quelque précise qu'elle fût à l'égard du sort éprouvé par les deux agens Anglais, leurs amis s'étaient flattés un moment que le fait n'était rien moins que certain. Avant son départ l'intrépide missionnaire était convenu avec le capitaine Grover que si, en arrivant à Bokhara, il ne trouvait plus M. Stoddart et M. Conolly vivans, il n'écrirait pas, et qu'en conséquence on n'ajoutât aucune foi à sa lettre, si elle annonçait cette malheureuse nouvelle. Or, comme le docteur Wolff disait dans sa lettre qu'il n'écrivait que par l'ordre formel de l'émir, on espérait que M. Stoddart et M. Conolly n'avaient pas encore été sacrifiés.

"Il n'est plus permis aujourd'hui de se rattacher à ce dernier espoir. Le comité vient de publier deux lettres du docteur Wolff: la première, datée du 27 Juin, lui est adressée: 'Il y a maintenant deux mois que je suis arrivé à Bokhara, et quoique l'émir m'ait plusieurs fois promis de me renvoyer immédiatement en Angleterre, je suis dans le plus grand danger. Je ne peux pas sortir de ma demeure sans une escorte de trois hommes. J'ai été abominablement volé, trompé, et outragé. L'ambassadeur Persan est bon pour moi, mais je ne crois pas qu'il soit en son pouvoir de me sauver. Nayeb-Abdul-Samet-Khan m'a arraché une promesse par écrit de lui payer cinq mille tomans pour prix de ma liberté. Je le soupçonne

d'avoir été la cause de la mort de Stoddart et de Conolly, en dépit de ses continuelles protestations d'amitié. L'émir est à présent à Samarcand, et je suis chaque jour dans l'attente de mon dernier moment. Il est vrai que pauvre Stoddart faisait ouvertement profession de Christianisme après avoir été forcé d'embrasser la religion Musulmane. Faites pour moi tout ce que vous pourrez faire *sans compromettre l'honneur de l'Angleterre.*'

" La seconde lettre est adressée à tous les souverains de l'Europe. Elle est datée du 1^er^ Août; elle respire les mêmes sentimens de magnanime dévouement et d'oubli de son propre danger. Là voici : ' Sires, je suis venu à Bokhara pour racheter la vie de deux officiers, Stoddart et Conolly ; mais l'un et l'autre avaient été mis à mort plusieurs mois avant mon départ, et je ne sais pas si je ne partagerai pas leur sort. *Je ne vous supplie pas de sauver ma vie ;* mais, Sires! deux cent mille Persans gémissent en esclavage dans le royaume de Bokhara. *Faites tous vos efforts pour les délivrer, et je me réjouirai dans la tombe que mon sang ait été la cause de la délivrance de tant de creatures humaines !* Je suis trop tourmenté et surveillé pour pouvoir en écrire d'avantage.'

" Ces lettres, répandues dans les trois royaumes, ont exité une vive émotion. *Quelle conduite tiendra lord Aberdeen dans cette affaire, que prend tant à cœur l'opinion publique,* et qui touche de si près à la *dignité du nom Anglais en Asie?* En attendant, le capitaine Grover est parti pour Pétersbourg avec des lettres du ministre des affaires étrangères pour le chargé d'affaires Britannique et pour le comte Woronzoff. Comme il est impossible de ne pas soupçonner dans tout ce qui s'est passé à Bokhara l'influence de la Russie, il va humblement supplier l'em-

pereur Nicolas d'entrependre la délivrance du missionaire Anglais victime de son zèle et de son dévouement."

As Dr. Wolff has made so much mention of the Naib Abd-ool-Samet-Khan, a short account of this gentleman may not be unacceptable to the reader.

This Abd-ool-Samet was a native of Tabris, and wished it to be believed that he had been in the service of the East India Company. It has been said that he had been a private in "Skinner's Light Horse;" this, however, is questionable. All the English this man could say was, "halt," "front," and "no force."

It is very curious that this latter expression "no force" is much used in the East as a sort of pacific expression. In Syria, if a European gets into a passion with a native, he will probably receive for answer, "No force, no force."

This man was born in the year 1784. He was some time in the service of Mahomed Ali Meerza, who, for some crime, sentenced Abd-ool-Samet to have his ears cut off. Abd-ool-Samet, however, contrived to escape with his ears, and entered the service of Mahomed Ali Meerza's antagonist, Abbas Meerza, at Tabris. He then wandered about India for some time; and, in 1832, Sir Robert Burnes found this adventurer at *Peshawer*, where he called himself the Vizier of Sultan Mohamed

Khan. He did not remain here long, but decamped, and arrived at Bokhara, where he ingratiated himself with the Reiss, who introduced him to the Ameer's notice, and he soon became the most influential man in Bokhara.)

When I saw that Doctor Wolff in his letters spoke of this man as his friend, and the real friend of the English nation, I became seriously alarmed for his safety.

CHAPTER VI.

Letter from Bokhara—Proclamation to all the Monarchs of Europe—Comments. 125 to 131

CHAPTER VI.

At the beginning of September the following interesting letter was received from Dr. Wolff:—

"*To Captain Grover.*

"*Bokhara, June 27th,* 1844.

"Dear Friend,

"I have now been already two months in this place; and though five or six times the King has promised to send me instantly to England with one of his own ambassadors, I am in the greatest danger. I cannot stir out of the house without a guard of three men.

"Dil Hassan Khan, the fellow sent with me by the Assoof-ood-Dowlah, has shamefully robbed, deceived, and outraged me. The Persian ambassador, Abbas Kouli Khan, is kind to me, but I think he will not have it in his power to rescue me. The Naib, Abd-ool-Samet Khan, has extorted from me a writing to pay him five thousand tomans to effect my liberation. I suspect that he was the cause of Stoddart and Conolly's death, in spite of his continued protestations of friendship.

"Pray console my dear wife and child as much as you can. I love them dearly. The Ameer is now at Samarcand, and I am here awaiting the most fatal orders from the King daily to reach me. It is true that poor Stoddart

openly professed Christianity after he had made a forced profession of Mohammedanism.

"Do for me what you can, as far as the honour of England is not compromised.

"All the inhabitants wish that either Russia or England should take the country.

"Yours affectionately,

"JOSEPH WOLFF.

"P.S. Do not believe any reports of my speedy departure, for *I am in great danger*."

The above letter was accompanied by the following address, both of which, I believe, have been translated into every European language:—

"*To all the Monarchs of Europe.*

"*Bokhara, August* 1*st*, 1844.

"Sires!

"I set out for Bokhara to ransom the lives of two officers, Colonel Stoddart and Captain Conolly; but both of them were murdered many months previous to my departure, and I do not know whether this blood of mine will not be spilt.

"I do not supplicate for my own safety. But, monarchs, two hundred thousand Persian slaves, many of them people of high talent, sigh in the kingdom of Bokhara! Endeavour to effect their liberation, and I shall rejoice in the grave that my blood has been thus the cause of the ransom of so many human beings. I am too much agitated, and too closely watched, to be able to say more!

"JOSEPH WOLFF."

Copies of the above letters were immediately sent to the Earl of Aberdeen.

In the whole course of my historical reading I have never met with a more remarkable instance of self-devotion than is to be found in the two foregoing documents.

By the letter addressed to me, the reader will perceive that the Doctor was keenly alive to the animal instinct of self-preservation, which it has pleased the Creator to implant in the breast of all His creatures. That strong and powerful instinct was, however, completely overcome by the acquired feelings of a devout Christian.

This extraordinary man first enjoins me to console, as well as I can, his dear wife and child.

Then he thinks of himself, "Do for me what you can, *as far as the honour of England is not compromised!*" So that he is more anxious about the honour of England than his own safety! And what did England care for Dr. Wolff? The reader will have seen that the British government required a guarantee for any advances that might be made by the British envoy at Teheran on behalf of this devoted man, and that a guarantee, for a purpose which ought to have been considered national, was actually accepted from a half-pay captain, who was called upon to pay 400*l.*

Had any of the letters written by Doctor Wolff come to the knowledge of the Ameer, his life must have paid the forfeit; and any one of these documents would have been a sufficient justification.

The reader will probably imagine that Dr. Wolff contrived some cunning, secret way of sending these letters to England. Not so. These letters were sent *open*, and *openly;* and, probably, this circumstance averted suspicion. Dr. Wolff would not have practised a deception to save a life which he was willing to lay down as a sacrifice for the unfortunate people languishing in captivity at Bokhara.

Have we not reason to be proud of Dr. Wolff? I trust the reception the good Doctor will meet with on his return to England will demonstrate to Europe that we are so!

Through the whole of Doctor Wolff's long and chequered life, the feeling that has influenced him, in the highest degree, has been to do all the good he possibly could to his fellow-creatures. At the public meeting at the Crown and Anchor, a person objected to Dr. Wolff, that he was a wild enthusiast. This was met by the observation, that we wanted an enthusiast; that none but an enthusiast would leave his country, his home, his wife and only child, to expose himself to all the

dangers of a journey to Bokhara, there to meet with probable imprisonment and death, without even the protection of a letter from the British government, which would alone insure his safety. Where, I will ask the reader, could another Dr. Wolff be found?

This excellent man had always in his mind that well-known maxim of Cicero, "Homines ad Deos nullâ re propriùs accedunt, quam salutem hominibus dando,"—Men resemble the Gods in nothing so much as in doing good to their fellow-creatures.

CHAPTER VII.

The Guarantee.

"Quanti emptæ? Parvo. Quanti ergo? Octo assibus. Eheu!"

HORACE.

What doth it cost? Not much, upon my word.
How much, pray? Why, twopence. Twopence! O Lord!

CHAPTER VII.

In the beginning of August I saw, at the Foreign Office, a despatch from Colonel Shiel, dated 12th June, 1844, in which that gentleman asks anxiously for instructions, in case Dr. Wolff should be obliged to draw upon him for money.

I saw that Dr. Wolff's existence might depend upon a supply of money; that a dishonoured bill, on being returned to Bokhara, would have to be paid with the Doctor's life. I became exceedingly anxious on this point, and wrote to Lord Aberdeen, begging him to communicate to me his reply to Colonel Shiel's question. Mr. Addington in reply states:—

"I am to state to you, in reply, that Colonel Shiel has been informed that, although her majesty's government are in no degree accountable for the expenses of Dr. Wolff's expedition, they cannot suffer him, under all the circumstances of the case, to be prejudiced at Bokhara, for the want of any reasonable amount of pecuniary as-

sistance; and, that any advances which Colonel Shiel may have found it necessary to make for him, up to the time of his arrival at Tehran from Bokhara, will be repaid to Colonel Shiel at all events, although on Dr. Wolff's arrival Colonel Shiel is to require from him a guarantee for the amount of such advances. This guarantee, Dr. Wolff, it appears by your letter, of which a copy has been sent to Colonel Shiel, will have no difficulty in giving.

"I am further to acquaint you, that Colonel Shiel has been instructed, in the event of Dr. Wolff being still detained at Bokhara, to use his utmost endeavours to bring about his release, and has been authorised to incur any reasonable expenditure which may be necessary for that purpose.

"I am, Sir,

"Your most obedient, humble servant,

"H. U. ADDINGTON.

"*August* 7, 1844."

To ask Dr. Wolff at Tehran to give a *guarantee* for any advances that might have been made to save him at Bokhara was asking what it was impossible the poor Doctor could give. I therefore, immediately, to relieve his lordship's anxiety, sent a guarantee in due form, which it appears from the following letter gave the satisfaction I expected; and thus one serious cause of anxiety was removed.

"*Mr. Addington to Captain Grover.*

"*Foreign Office, Aug.* 14, 1844.

"Sir,—I am directed by the Earl of Aberdeen to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 10th instant, inclosing a guarantee making yourself personally liable for any advances which Lieut.-Colonel Shiel, or Her Majesty's government may think fit to make to Dr. Wolff, between Bokhara and Tehran, not exceeding the sum of five hundred pounds; and I am to acquaint you, in reply, that Lord Aberdeen is entirely satisfied with the guarantee which you have thus given.

"I am, Sir,

"Your most obedient, humble servant,

"H. U. ADDINGTON."

To avoid the necessity of again recurring to this subject, I will now inform the reader what was the result of this affair. It was fortunate that my liability had been limited to 500*l.* Before Dr. Wolff could leave Bokhara, he was obliged to give a bill for 2500*l.* to Abd-ool-Samet. This, however, it appears, was compromised at Tehran for 400*l.* As I had received several letters from Doctor Wolff, which made no allusion to this affair, I presumed it was at an end, and that Colonel Shiel had refused to sanction the payment of a bill obtained by violence and fraud. I heard of Dr. Wolff's safe

arrival at Tabris, and considered my guarantee at an end.

On the 3d of February, however, a bill of exchange, drawn in favour of Colonel Shiel, was sent to me from the Foreign Office; and, although a month was allowed for payment, I immediately sold property, and on the following day was enabled to pay the demand in full. Had it been necessary to have sold my last shirt, it should have been done.

I then wrote the following letter to the Secretary of State, from whose office the bill had been presented:—

"*From Captain Grover to Lord Aberdeen.*

"*Army and Navy Club,*
"*Feb. 6th,* 1845.

"My Lord,

"I have the honour to inform your Lordship that a bill of exchange for four hundred pounds, drawn in favour of Colonel Shiel, Her Majesty's envoy at the court of Persia, was presented to me yesterday, from the Foreign Office, for acceptance.

"Your Lordship had the goodness to authorise Colonel Shiel, on security being given to make such advances as he might consider necessary for the safety of Dr. Wolff, who, your Lordship will recollect, was despatched to Bokhara in search of Lieut.-Colonel Stoddart and Captain Conolly, British officers, imprisoned by the king of that

country while employed on a diplomatic mission in the service of our gracious Queen Victoria.

"Your Lordship will also recollect that I gave a guarantee, rendering myself personally liable for any sums that might be so advanced between Bokhara and Tehran by Colonel Shiel or Her Majesty's government, not exceeding the sum of 500*l.*, with which guarantee your Lordship did me the honour to express yourself satisfied.

"I have now to inform your Lordship that I immediately accepted the bill for which my guarantee made me liable; and, although it would not be due until the 10th of March, it may be satisfactory to your Lordship to know that I have this day paid the 400*l.*, and I therefore request you will have the goodness to order that my guarantee be returned to me.

"I rejoice exceedingly that my four hundred pounds have been the means of restoring to Her Majesty such a subject as Dr. Wolff; and I regret that it never occurred to me, when I first became anxious about poor Stoddart and Conolly, to render myself personally liable for any expenses an attempt to recover Queen Victoria's ambassadors might have cost the nation, as it would probably have procured the restoration to liberty of those unfortunate envoys.

"Thanking your Lordship for having had so much confidence in a poor half-pay captain as to have accepted his guarantee for so large a sum as five hundred pounds,

"I have the honour to be,
"My Lord,
"Your Lordship's obedient Servant,
"JOHN GROVER,
"Captain Unattached."

The following reply was received :—

"*Mr. Addington to Captain Grover.*

"*Foreign Office, Feb.* 11, 1845.

"Sir,

"I am directed by the Earl of Aberdeen to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 6th inst., in which you state that a bill for 400*l.* in favour of Colonel Shiel had been presented to you from the Foreign Office for acceptance, and that you had accepted it, and already paid the amount; and you request, in consequence, that the guarantee which you transmitted to Lord Aberdeen in August last may be returned to you.

"I am to inform you, in reply, that the bill in question was not sent to you officially from this office—Lord Aberdeen has no knowledge of the bill; but, in consequence of inquiries made since the receipt of your letter, it has been ascertained that the bill in question was transmitted by Lieut.-Colonel Shiel to his private agent in this office, to be realised, and the amount thereof placed to his credit.

"I am, nevertheless, directed by Lord Aberdeen to return herewith, agreeably to your desire, the guarantee which you gave his Lordship in August last.

"I am, Sir,

"Your most obedient, humble Servant,

"H. U. ADDINGTON.

"*To Captain Grover.*"

To this I sent the following reply :—

"*Captain Grover to Lord Aberdeen.*

"*Army and Navy Club,*
"*Feb.* 14, 1845.

"My Lord,

"I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of Mr. Addington's letter of the 10th instant, enclosing my guarantee for 500*l.*, which I gave your Lordship, in compliance with Mr. Addington's letter of the 7th August, 1844, to secure Her Majesty's government for any advances Colonel Shiel might think necessary for Dr. Wolff's safety, who, I cannot too frequently remind your Lordship, was sent to Bokhara in search of two of Queen Victoria's envoys.

"By Mr. Addington's letter I am surprised to learn that the bill of exchange which Dr. Wolff drew upon me in favour of Colonel Shiel to pay the bill Abd-ool-Samet Khan extorted from him at Bokhara, and payment of which was demanded by Mr. Bandinel, one of your Lordship's chief clerks, was not 'officially sent,' and that your Lordship knew nothing about the bill until inquiries were made since the receipt of my letter of the 6th instant.

"Now, my Lord, this bill of exchange, although drawn in favour of Colonel Shiel, does not bear that gentleman's endorsement, but is signed on his behalf by Mr. Bandinel, a chief clerk in your Lordship's office. This being pointed out to me, I did not for a moment doubt that the bill was sent by your Lordship's direction, and I therefore immediately paid the amount claimed, without making any inquiry about Mr. Bandinel's authority to endorse bills in Colonel Shiel's name.

"I think it right to inform your Lordship that I have had no funds belonging to Dr. Wolff in my possession; that the funds subscribed for Dr. Wolff's mission have been expended already; and that that gentleman never had authority to draw upon me, except for the ransom of Stoddart, Conolly, and Wyburd, Her Majesty's envoys, and other prisoners; and it was only because I was satisfied that the bill came officially from your Lordship's office, and that by my guarantee I had made myself liable, that I paid it.

"I should find it difficult to divest this transaction of its official character, had I not your Lordship's declaration on the subject. Now, however, I think I clearly understand the whole affair.

"Colonel Stoddart and Captain Conolly are sent on missions to Central Asia; that is official. Dr. Wolff is sent after them; that is private. Your Lordship requires a guarantee for the government against loss; that is official. I give that guarantee; that is official. A bill is presented to me from the Foreign Office, drawn in favour of the British envoy at Tehran, and endorsed by one of your Lordship's chief clerks; I considered that official. Your Lordship's chief clerk receives the money; that is, of course, private. Your Lordship returns my guarantee; that is official.

"I have the honour to be,
"My Lord,
"Your Lordship's obedient,
"Very humble Servant,
"JOHN GROVER.

"*To the Right Hon.*
"*The Earl of Aberdeen,*
"*&c. &c.*
"*Secretary of State.*"

I was in hopes the above letter would have terminated my correspondence with the Foreign Office on this subject. After a lapse of eleven days, however, I received the following, to which I beg leave to call the reader's attention as a specimen of diplomatic style and argument:—

"*Mr. Addington to Captain Grover.*

"*Foreign Office, Feb.* 24, 1845.

"Sir,—I am directed by the Earl of Aberdeen to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 14th instant, relative to the bill for 400*l.* drawn at Tehran upon you by Dr. Wolff, in favour of Colonel Shiel, and sent to you by Mr. Bandinel of this office, who had previously endorsed it for Colonel Shiel.

"I am to repeat to you, that the bill in question was a private bill. Neither the Secretary of State, nor the under secretaries, nor any clerk, connected with this office, had, as such, any knowledge of the bill prior to the receipt of your letter of the 14th instant. Mr. Bandinel endorsed it, not as a clerk of this office, but by virtue of a power which he holds from Colonel Shiel as his private agent and attorney.

"Had the bill been official, it would have been drawn by Colonel Shiel direct on Lord Aberdeen, and presented to you for payment, on the faith of the guarantee which you furnished to his Lordship in August last.

"I am directed by his Lordship to remind you, that you have been long since put in full possession of the grounds upon which was founded the decision of Her Majesty's go-

vernment, not to risk either your life, or that of Dr. Wolff, in an expedition which appeared to them both hazardous and hopeless. That they judged rightly in viewing it as hopeless, is proved by Dr. Wolff's confirmation of the fact mentioned by Sauleh Mohammed,* on whose report, credited as it was by Colonel Shiel, and corroborated by other circumstances, they relied that Colonel Stoddart and Captain Conolly had been put to death about July 1842. Of the dangers of the expedition you will probably have derived sufficient evidence from Dr. Wolff's reports from Bokhara.

"But, having declined to send out an expedition on the public account, it must be obvious that Her Majesty's government could not consistently or properly charge the public with the expense of an expedition undertaken on private account.

"Nevertheless, when an association was formed for despatching Dr. Wolff to Bokhara, on its own responsibility and at its own expense, so far from throwing any obstacles in the way, although, still of opinion that the attempt was hopeless, Lord Aberdeen did every thing in his power to forward the objects of the Association, and more than once received both their cordial thanks, and your own. Amongst other modes of assistance, his Lordship instructed Colonel Shiel to advance money to Dr. Wolff *in case of need; but it* was clearly intimated to *you, that any advances so made were* to be repaid. Upon *this intimation you, of your own accord,* furnished Lord *Aberdeen with the guarantee which* is now returned to *you.*

"*Such, simply, are the circumstances* of this trans-

* See Dr. Wolff's account of this man, page 53.—J. G.

action, which Lord Aberdeen has directed me thus briefly to recapitulate, because the tone and language of your letter would seem to cast a slur upon the conduct of her Majesty's government, which has, in fact, been throughout humane and consistent.

"I am, Sir,

"Your most obedient, humble Servant,

"H. U. ADDINGTON."

Now, in the name of all that is diplomatic, from Machiavelli to the junior clerk in Downing Street, what has all this to do with my having paid the 400*l.* demanded, and having got back my guarantee? What has Saleh Mohammed to do with my guarantee?

This Saleh Mohammed is Lord Aberdeen's hobby, and is kept ready saddled and bridled in Mr. Hammond's office, as his Lordship's "*cheval de bataille;*" and whenever I have pressed his Lordship hard, he sticks his spurs into Saleh Mohammed, and endeavours to ride over me. In the foregoing letter, Lord Aberdeen is made to say, that her Majesty's government had decided *not* to risk my life, or that of Dr. Wolff, surely the word *not* has been inserted by mistake. The reader will have seen that every inducement was offered to induce me to proceed as "an innocent traveller," to the

dark well at Bokhara, and that the only thing that would have insured my safety was refused.

Now, I am sure any person on reading the above long epistle, would be disposed to imagine that I had repented having made the sacrifice of paying 400*l.* for Dr. Wolff's release, and that I had been endeavouring, directly or indirectly, to obtain my money back again. I instantly wrote the following reply:—

"*Captain Grover to Lord Aberdeen.*

"*Army and Navy Club,*
"*Feb.* 25, 1845.

"My Lord,—I have been honoured by a long letter, dated yesterday, written by your Lordship's direction, and which is stated to be a reply to my letter of the 14th instant.

"This letter, however, is, in fact, merely a repetition of your Lordship's previous communications, the object of the first three paragraphs being to shew, that the bill for 400*l.* drawn upon me, in favour of the British envoy at Tehran, and payment of which was received by one of your Lordship's chief clerks, was not officially sent.

"I cannot at all understand, why your lordship takes so much pains to insist upon this point. To me it is not of the slightest consequence, whether Mr. Bandinel, your Lordship's chief clerk, presented the bill 'as such,' privately, or officially, on your Lordship's account, or on account of her Majesty's envoy at Tehran. Having paid

the money, and got back my guarantee, I thought the matter at an end; but from your Lordship's reverting again to the subject, and defending yourself when there is no accusation, I am almost induced to imagine, that, for some reason or other, your Lordship is ashamed of the transaction.

"In the fifth paragraph, your Lordship is made to say, that having declined to send out an expedition on the public account, it must be obvious, that her majesty's government could not consistently or properly charge the public with the expense of an expedition undertaken on private account.

"Why state to me a proposition which your Lordship says is so obvious?

"I never asked the government to repay me the sum Dr. Wolff's release has cost me, and beg leave to assure your Lordship that I have no intention whatever of so doing.

"Although but a very small contributor to the public revenue, it is to me a matter of sincere congratulation to find in your Lordship so zealous a guardian of the public purse; and should this affair of the guarantee ever come before the public, I sincerely hope your Lordship's conduct will be appreciated as it deserves.

"In the subsequent paragraph your Lordship reminds me that you have received the cordial thanks of the Committee and myself. This is quite true. I took every opportunity, publicly and privately,* of expressing my thanks to your Lordship, as long as I was satisfied of your Lordship's sincerity. When, however, I saw Count de Médem's account of his interview with the Bokhara ambassador, published in the newspapers, within forty-eight

hours after its arrival at your Lordship's office, and that the account sent by our own envoy, which positively contradicted this account of the execution, had never been communicated to the public, I must confess that the Committee doubted your Lordship's sincerity. It appeared to us that this suppression of intelligence could only be intended to induce a belief in the public mind that the two envoys had ceased to exist, and that it might, in fact, produce unfavourable results.

"Your Lordship further says, that you instructed Colonel Shiel to advance money to Dr. Wolff in case of need; but it was clearly intimated to me that any advances so made were to be repaid. That, upon this intimation, I, of my own accord, furnished your Lordship with a guarantee, which has been now returned to me.

"This is all perfectly true; and as, so far from denying my liability, I paid the bill presented by your Lordship's chief clerk a month before it was due, I cannot see your Lordship's object in taking the trouble to re-state it.

"Your Lordship, in conclusion, says, that my letter seems to cast a slur upon the conduct of her Majesty's government, which has, in fact, been throughout humane and consistent.

"Now, my Lord, if any slur attaches to her Majesty's government with respect to the ill-treatment of our two envoys, Colonel Stoddart and Captain Conolly, it must arise from the conduct of the government, not from my allusion to such conduct. And I will now, in conclusion, plainly tell your Lordship that a Dr. Wolff might as easily have been found in 1840, 1841, or 1842, as in 1843; that Dr. Wolff's danger arose from his not having been furnished with authority to claim our envoys; and that,

if your Lordship had done your duty, those brave and faithful envoys would not have been allowed to linger during those years in captivity.

"I have the honour to be,
"My Lord,
"Your Lordship's obedient, humble Servant,
"JOHN GROVER,
"Captain Unattached.

"*The Right Hon.*
"*The Earl of Aberdeen,*
"*&c. &c. &c.*
"*Secretary of State.*"

As Mr. Addington's letter of the 24th February misstated the date assigned by Saleh Mohammed for the execution, I wrote the following letter to Lord Aberdeen:—

"*Army and Navy Club,*
"*Feb. 28th,* 1845.

"My Lord,

"I take the liberty of requesting your Lordship to correct an error in Mr. Addington's letter of the 24th instant, written by your Lordship's direction.

"Mr. Addington, in referring to Saleh Mohammed's statement, says that the execution took place about July 1842.

"Now, my Lord, Saleh Mohammed states distinctly that the execution took place on the '17th June, 1842.'

"The question of the date of the execution, if it really has taken place, I have already had the honour of stating to your Lordship, I do not consider of the least consequence; but I do think it of the greatest importance, as I

have already endeavoured to impress upon the mind of Mr. Addington, that when allusion is made to a document, that it should be fairly and faithfully done, and that it should not be necessary to compare the letters coming from your Lordship's office with the documents to which they are said to refer.

"I trust your Lordship will not imagine that I mean to insinuate that you are capable of garbling, for the purpose of appearing 'humane and consistent.' By no means. I merely consider this one of the 'errors' * for which your Lordship's office is so remarkable, and which I have already, on more than one occasion, been under the painful necessity of calling upon your Lordship to correct.

"In my letter of the 25th instant I did not point out this 'error,' as I had not my copy of Saleh Mohammed's statement at hand.

"I have the honour to be,
"My Lord,
"Your Lordship's obedient, humble Servant,
"JOHN GROVER,
"Captain Unattached.

"*The Right Hon.*
"*The Earl of Aberdeen,*
"*&c. &c. &c.*
"*Secretary of State.*"

On the 1st March I received the following note:—

* The reader will find the most remarkable of the errors here alluded to in Lieutenant Wyburd's case.

"Lord Aberdeen presents his compliments to Captain Grover, and requests that Captain Grover will call upon him at this office, either to-day, at four o'clock, or on Monday next, 3d inst. at three o'clock in the afternoon.

"*Foreign Office, March 1st*, 1845."

I accordingly had an interview with Lord Aberdeen; and, immediately on leaving the Foreign Office, I wrote the following

"*Memorandum of an interview with the Earl of Aberdeen at the Foreign Office, on the 3d March*, 1845, *at half-past three o'clock* P.M., *written at the Athenæum Club immediately after the interview.*

"Lord Aberdeen informed me that he sent for me to have some conversation concerning a late correspondence, which, it appeared to his Lordship, must have originated in a misunderstanding.

"His Lordship reminded me that, ever since the departure of Dr. Wolff, I had expressed myself grateful for the assistance he had afforded, but that now my language and style were completely changed.

"With respect to the bill of exchange which appeared to be the cause of all this misunderstanding, and for which my guarantee undoubtedly made me liable, he could assure me that he knew nothing about it until he received my letter; that although

Mr. Bandinel, one of the chief clerks in his office, had certainly received the money, it was only as Colonel Shiel's banker that he did so — just as Messrs. Drummond's might have done; that his Lordship admired, and had always appreciated, my persevering efforts in behalf of my friend; that after the explanation that had taken place on the subject of my pamphlet, he thought we were friends; that he had always treated me as such, and that he regretted the misunderstanding that had arisen, which he was now desirous of removing; his having thus sent for me to-day might be considered as a proof of his feeling towards me. His Lordship certainly thought it very hard that, after what I had already done, I should be called upon to pay the large sum for which my guarantee had made me responsible; and that it had been his intention, had I written to him stating the hardship of the case, and requesting repayment, to have ordered whatever sum the restoration of Dr. Wolff might have cost me to be repaid; that the letters I had written of course rendered the repayment of these sums impossible; still, if I would recall my two last letters, he would now order the repayment. But he must confess that he had never been addressed in such a style before; but he could, and did, make allowance for the irritation I naturally must

feel at being called upon to pay so large a sum after what I had already done. His Lordship therefore trusted that the past would be forgotten, that I would recall my letters, and that all the sums I had expended should be immediately repaid me.

"I replied, That his Lordship had done me too much honour in entering into this long explanation, which was quite unnecessary; that having paid the money, and received back my guarantee, I thought the affair at an end; that the tone of my letters was, in some measure, provoked by the letters written by his Lordship's order; and that Mr. Addington's last letter, if read by any person unacquainted with the affair, would induce a belief that I had been endeavouring, either directly or indirectly, to obtain the restitution of the sum I had paid for Dr. Wolff's ransom. I informed his Lordship that I was a plain soldier, always accustomed, and always resolved to express my feelings and opinions in the plainest language; that I could readily understand that, in his Lordship's exalted position, such language did not often reach his ears, and must sound strange to him; that when I gave his Lordship the guarantee, I was perfectly aware of its nature. When, however, I received accounts of Dr. Wolff's arrival at Tabris, without any mention of the bill

he had given to Abd-ool-Samet Khan for his ransom, I thought the affair settled, and was certainly surprised when a bill for 400*l.* was presented from his Lordship's office. I however, instantly accepted that bill, and was fortunately enabled the next day to raise the money to pay it. That his Lordship was much mistaken if he thought I felt in the least irritated at paying the money, or that this feeling had any thing whatever to do with the tone of my correspondence.

"With respect to his Lordship's avowed intention to have repaid me the money, had I represented the case in a proper manner, I begged leave to assure his Lordship that I never for one moment had the slightest intention of requesting repayment. Such an idea never entered my head; and, as I had already written to his Lordship, such a request I never would make.

"With respect to the letters, so far from wishing to recall them, I wished his Lordship to receive them in their plainest, fullest sense, not referring to his Lordship personally, but to the office he held.

"That my distrust of his Lordship had nothing whatever to do with the bill of exchange. That my first distrust of his Lordship arose from a long state-paper which his Lordship did me the honour

to address me, which was entitled 'Substance of Reports,' but which I considered very unfair special pleading, as I wrote to his Lordship when that statement was published in the public newspapers, and which publication his Lordship informed me was made by his authority.

"When, however, I saw that Count de Médem's despatch, giving an account of an interview with the Bokhara ambassador, from which it appeared that Colonel Stoddart and Captain Conolly had been put to death, was published within forty-eight hours after its receipt at the Foreign Office, while Colonel Shiel's despatch, totally contradicting this Russian account, was not published, and has never yet been communicated to the public, I must candidly tell his Lordship that my suspicions were changed to conviction, and that I felt satisfied that this account of our own ambassador was never published, because his Lordship did not wish to remove the impression the hasty publication of Count de Médem's despatch had occasioned; that the object of the Foreign Office was to establish a belief—a false belief—that Colonel Stoddart and Captain Conolly had ceased to exist; that I certainly had his Lordship's authority to publish all the information I received at the Foreign Office; that I did not do so, as Dr.

Wolff was too far advanced on his journey to be affected by such rumours. I therefore waited until I received an account of his interview with this ambassador, which I immediately published. I then shewed the disastrous results such unfair, one-sided publications might produce, and mentioned the numerous statements in the Indian papers, all tending to shew that Colonel Stoddart and Captain Conolly were still alive, and which had not been copied into the London papers, owing to the belief of the death of these officers, which his Lordship had endeavoured to establish.

"His Lordship replied, that with respect to the publication, what object could he possibly have? what could be his motive for misrepresenting?

"I replied, that I never occupied my time in guessing at motives; all my attention was devoted to facts as they presented themselves, and to the probable, or expected results.

"His Lordship again warmly urged me to withdraw the letters. I positively and firmly declined, telling his Lordship, that if he were as happy at saving the 400*l.* as I was in paying them, and being the humble instrument of restoring Dr. Wolff to his country, then, indeed, we were two happy men. I felt too indignant at the insult that had

been offered to me to hear his Lordship's reply, and hastened as quickly as possible from his Lordship's presence."

The circumstance that most surprised me at this interview was his Lordship's appreciation of my conduct; now, in all my correspondence and various interviews with his Lordship, as far as I can judge, my conduct was not favourably appreciated.

It is remarkable, that having paid the 400*l.* on the 5th February, and received back my guarantee, it did not occur to Lord Aberdeen until the 3d March, that such a payment might be inconvenient to a half-pay captain. It is also remarkable, that his Lordship, to recall two letters, would order the payment of a sum with which "it was obvious her Majesty's government could not consistently or properly charge the public."

The day after my interview with Lord Aberdeen, I laid the whole affair before the Committee, and read the foregoing memorandum. I told the Committee, that I felt Lord Aberdeen had inflicted upon me a grave insult, in offering to return me the 400*l.* I had paid for Dr. Wolff's ransom, provided I would withdraw my two last letters; and I asked, whether it were possible I could allow such an insult to pass without notice. The unanimous

opinion was, that I ought as calmly as possible to state to Lord Aberdeen, that I considered he had insulted me in making the proposition.

On the next day, I received the following letter:—

"*Mr. Addington to Captain Grover.*

"*Foreign Office, March* 3, 1845.

"Sir,—Lord Aberdeen has received with much pain and surprise the two letters which you have thought fit to address to him under date of the 25th and 28th ultimo.

"The tone and tenour of those letters appeared to his Lordship so exceptionable, especially after the consideration with which you have been invariably treated by this office, that his Lordship at once determined, on the receipt of the second letter, to invite you to a personal interview this day, in order to point out to you the manifest impropriety of addressing him in the language which you had thought fit to employ, and, by a frank explanation which might have the effect of dissipating the entire misconception which seemed to have got possession of your mind, with respect to the motives and proceedings of his Lordship towards you, to induce you to withdraw and cancel these letters. At that interview his Lordship explained to you, that although the opinion of her Majesty's government respecting the melancholy fate of Colonel Stoddart and Captain Conolly differed from your own, your motives and efforts were not the less highly appreciated. On the contrary, so well disposed was his Lordship to respect your fair claims, on account of the laudable exertions which you had made, and the expense

to which you had been put, that, although perhaps not strictly correct in principle, he was well inclined to make good to you that part of the costs which had fallen directly on yourself. But with such letters from you in his possession as those herein alluded to, a feeling of self-respect rendered it impossible for him to follow the bent of his own personal inclination.

"Having unfortunately failed to persuade you to comply with his recommendation to withdraw your two letters, it only remains for Lord Aberdeen to declare to you, that neither a sense of what he owes to his own position, nor the consciousness of having constantly treated you with liberality and consideration, will allow him to authorise any reply being made to the contents of letters couched in a tone so opposed to that courtesy which you have experienced from this office, and so different from that which he might fairly have expected at your hands.

"I am, Sir,

"Your most obedient, humble Servant,

"H. U. ADDINGTON.

"*To Captain Grover.*"

To this letter I instantly sent the following reply:—

"*Captain Grover to the Earl of Aberdeen.*

"*Army and Navy Club,*
"*March* 4, 1845.

"My Lord,—In acknowledging the receipt of Mr. Addington's letter of yesterday, in reference to the interview to which your Lordship did me the honour to invite me, I think it due to my honour as a British officer, to

acquaint your Lordship, that in imagining for one moment, that I could be induced to withdraw letters, which nothing but a sense of duty induced me to write, by an offer to repay me the sum Dr. Wolff's release had cost me, and with which sum I had been informed by your Lordship's letter of the 24th February, it was obvious that her Majesty's government could not consistently or properly charge the public, and which in my letter to your Lordship of the 25th February, I had distinctly declared, that I never had, and never would, ask the Government to repay me,—I say, my Lord, that in imagining for one moment, that such an offer could induce me to withdraw letters, reflecting upon the inaccuracy of the correspondence of your Lordship's office, you inflicted upon me a grave and serious insult as an officer and a gentleman.

"Requesting your Lordship will have the goodness to direct that the receipt of this letter be acknowledged,

"I have the honour to be,

"My Lord,

"Your Lordship's obedient, humble Servant,

"JOHN GROVER,

"Captain Unattached."

To this, Lord Aberdeen vouchsafed the following:—

"*Mr. Addington to Captain Grover.*

"*Foreign Office, March* 6, 1845.

"Sir,—I am directed by the Earl of Aberdeen to acknowledge, as requested by you, the receipt of your letter of the 4th instant.

"Lord Aberdeen regrets to perceive by that letter, that the strange misconception with regard to the conduct of this office towards you, under which you have laboured for some time past, still prevails in your mind; but as all attempt to dispel the error has hitherto proved fruitless, his Lordship will not renew his efforts for that object.

"I am, however, to assure you, that the intimation made to you at the interview you had with Lord Aberdeen on the 3d instant, of his disposition to repay the costs incurred by you in Dr. Wolff's expedition, arose from a feeling, that, although perhaps not strictly due as a matter of right, yet, that your efforts on behalf of Colonel Stoddart and Captain Conolly might fairly entitle you to be relieved from any personal loss, especially, as on further consideration of your previous letters of the 6th and 14th of February, it appeared to Lord Aberdeen, that the payment which you had so promptly made, was attended with some inconvenience to you. He thought, too, that your letters of the 25th and 28th ultimo, having been written under an entire misconception, you could have felt no difficulty whatever in withdrawing them as soon as this explanation had taken place; and he considered himself fully justified, under the circumstances, in making the request.

"In all your communications with this office, Lord Aberdeen has been desirous that you should be treated with consideration and regard; and he can scarcely believe it possible that, on calm reflection, you should really think that you have any reasonable ground for dissatisfaction or complaint.

"I am, Sir,

"Your most obedient, humble Servant,

"H. U. ADDINGTON."

The reader will observe by the foregoing letter that Lord Aberdeen says, that he invited me to a personal interview, that he might by a frank explanation dissipate the entire misconception which seemed to have got possession of my mind, &c. In the letters which Lord Aberdeen wishes me to withdraw, the reader will have observed, that I complained of two things,—the inaccuracy of the Foreign Office in quoting official documents; and Lord Aberdeen's neglect of his duty in not taking proper measures for obtaining the release, or ascertaining the fate, of the Bokhara victims.

Now, all Lord Aberdeen's explanation, on reducing it to its simplest terms, consisted in this: Wthdraw your letters and I will give you 400*l.* This was certainly a sovereign argument; and, probably, from the "frankness" with which it was made, is generally found convincing at the Foreign Office. Had Lord Aberdeen condescended to explain to me that I had done him an injustice, I should have felt grateful to his Lordship for affording me an opportunity to withdraw the letters; and I should have apologised in the fullest manner for the injury I had inflicted. In thinking that the offer of 400*l.* could have induced me to withdraw, and swallow the accusation I had made, I saw that his Lordship mistook my character, and I hastened so rapidly

from the tempter, that I left my gloves behind me, and did not stop to breathe until I got into St. James's Park.

Now, I really must say, that the foregoing correspondence does not appear to me at all creditable to the Foreign Office. I do not allude to the subject in discussion, but to the mode of conducting the argument. How different is the style of correspondence of the Commander-in-Chief's office, or the War-Office, where the object appears to be to tell the truth in the plainest possible language, while in Downing Street, the object seems to be, to envelope the plainest facts with a diplomatic mist. All these "arts of fence" will not stand a moment against a bold, straightforward thrust.

Some time ago, at Paris, I strolled into Monsieur C * * * 's Salle d'Armes. Being introduced to the "Professor" as an English officer, he asked me to do him the honour to cross a foil with him. I replied, that I knew nothing of fencing, which was not much considered in our service, as we thought it better that an individual should consider that his safety depended upon his keeping steadily to his post; and, that we did not attach much importance to displays of personal gallantry, which might not always be for the general benefit. "But," said M. C * * *, "you might by accident be separated from

your regiment, and if I were to come up I could disarm you in an instant. Take a foil for a moment, and I will shew you." I took the proffered instrument, M. C * * * cried, "à vous!" and in an instant my foil bent upon his "plastron." "That," said M. C * * *, "is quite contrary to the laws of fencing, you should wait until my foil crosses yours, and then make a demi-circle." "Monsieur C * * *, I cannot discuss with a dead man the 'cérémonies d'usage,' I have killed you in a manner perfectly satisfactory to my feelings; if, however, there be any gentleman among '*la galerie*,' who would like to take a foil, I should be happy to repeat the experiment." An old Colonel of Cuirassiers good-humouredly stepped forward and took the foil; we were placed at six paces, and on M. C * * *'s clapping his hands were to make the best use of our instruments. The Colonel placed himself '*en position*,' and at the signal my foil touched his breast. This afforded great amusement to all, except M. C * * *, who, I dare say, thought that the "noble science" was not treated with sufficient respect.

In all transactions in this world, straightforward dealing, with good sense, will beat all the dishonest arts that may be employed against it. "Honesty is the best policy."

The more I see of the correspondence of the

Foreign Office, the more difficult do I find it to understand their reasoning. It now appears to Lord Aberdeen (above a month after I have paid the money, got back my guarantee, and declared myself perfectly satisfied, contented, and "happy"), that I "was fairly entitled to be relieved from any personal loss." Why, then, was I *not* so relieved? It appears, however, that it never occurred to his Lordship to what I was "fairly entitled," until he received a letter "which rendered it impossible for him to follow the bent of his own personal inclination." I recollect, when a boy at school, reading about a respectable old gentleman, who had a splendid villa on the road between Rome and Ostia, of whom it was said, "Tenebras rebus clarissimis obducere solebat male narrando;" which means, That the plainest proposition became obscure if he attempted to enunciate it.

What a treasure he would have been in the Foreign Office!

As I am now on the subject of diplomacy, I will inform the reader that I am myself something of a diplomatist, having devoted some of the best years of my life to the study of the "Jus gentium." I studied diplomacy at a foreign university as a science; and have a sovereign contempt for the pettifogging practices which are now miscalled di-

plomacy. Having said thus much, in hopes that Lord Aberdeen may consider of some value a legal opinion, which I give gratis—for nothing, I now place on record as a jurisconsult the following opinion:—

Had Dr. Wolff gone to Bokhara merely as a merchant on lawful business, and had he been imprisoned without having contravened or infringed any law, then Queen Victoria's government was bound to obtain that man's release, without inquiring whether the cost would be 400*l.* or 4000*l.*

Now, I am prepared to discuss that question with any gentleman in Downing Street, whenever and wherever he pleases, it being expressly stipulated, that the word "expediency," which has no Latin equivalent, be left out of the argument.

On the 10th March, I brought the whole of the guarantee affair formally before the Committee, who passed the following Resolution:—

Extract from the Minutes of the Committee of the Stoddart and Conolly Fund.

"*March* 10, 1845.

"The Committee having considered all the correspondence that has taken place between Captain Grover and the Foreign Office, on the subject of the guarantee required by her Majesty's government, as an indemnity for any expense the release of Dr. Wolff, who was

despatched from this country in search of two of her Majesty's envoys might cost the nation, think it due to Captain Grover to place the following opinion on the Minutes of the Committee.

"Resolved unanimously,—

"That the offer of the payment of the 400*l.* to Captain Grover, as an inducement to withdraw his letters of the 25th and 28th February left Captain Grover, who was acting, not merely for himself, but for the Committee, no alternative but to decline that proposition; and that Captain Grover had a right to complain that sufficient deference had not been paid in making it to the feelings of an officer in his position.

"Captain Grover is requested to communicate the above resolution to the Right Honourable the Earl of Aberdeen."

Thus ends the history of the guarantee, and I must say I am rather glad to perceive that Lord Aberdeen exhibits some symptoms of being ashamed of the transaction, when he puts forth his fine-drawn, Foreign-Office distinction between a bill, presented officially "as such" from the office, and being presented by his Lordship's chief clerk, as agent to her Majesty's envoy at Tehran. I do not pretend to be much acquainted with bills of exchange, the one in question being the first I ever paid or accepted in my life. The distinction might,

however, have been of importance to me. I paid the bill a month before it was due, and Mr. Bandinel, as the envoy's agent, did not allow me any discount; had he received the money, being Lord Aberdeen's chief clerk, officially, "as such," he probably would have allowed me five pound per cent for prompt payment.

Some simpleton (*vide* "Eton Latin Grammar") called "*opes*" the "*irritamenta malorum.*" Lord Aberdeen knows better, they are the only *irritamenta* of Foreign-Office services; and therefore it is delightful to see our rulers grasping so firmly the strings of the public purse.

No one knows better than the noble Lord at the head of the Foreign Office the value of the *Diva potens rerum, domitrixque pecunia fati.*

The difference between the value of money and honour is so clearly laid down in the catechism of that profound political economist Sir John Falstaff, that I think the reader will be gratified with the perusal of that profound, statesmanlike document which I transcribe from an original copy:—

"Can honour set a leg? No. Or an arm? No. Or take away the grief of a wound? No. Honour hath no skill in surgery then? No. Will honour advance a man in a diplomatic career? No. Will honour obtain military advancement? Slowly. Will money? Rapidly. Will

honour obtain a man an ensign's commission? No. Will money? Yes. Honour hath no interest at the government offices then? No. What is honour? A word. What is that word? Honour. What is that honour? Air—a trim reckoning! Who hath it? He that died on Wednesday. Doth he feel it? No. Is it insensible then? Yea, to the dead. But will it not live with the living? No. Why? Detraction will not suffer it; therefore I'll none of it: honour is a mere scutcheon, and so ends my catechism."—*Henry IV. Part I. Act V.*

Falstaff is quite right, money is the thing.

"Money is a good soldier, and will on."

CHAPTER VIII.

Parliamentary contradictions—Sir R. Peel—Bifrons—Colonel Shiel's Despatch—Dr. Bowring.

CHAPTER VIII.

I WILL now request the reader's attention to a few extracts from "Hansard's Parliamentary Debates," which I consider worthy of every Englishman's most serious attention :—

House of Commons, Thursday, August 24, 1843.

MURDER OF COLONEL STODDART AND CAPTAIN CONOLLY.

"Mr. Cochrane begged to ask the right hon. baronet at the head of her Majesty's government, whether any official account had been received of the barbarous murder of Colonel Stoddart and Captain Conolly? With the latter of these gentlemen he had had the happiness to be acquainted, and knew him to be a man of most estimable character. He was sure the house would sympathise with him on the occasion, and he begged to ask the right hon. gentleman, whether, in case the report on this subject was confirmed, he had any hopes of obtaining redress against the Ameer of Bokhara, who had been guilty of the crime?

"Sir R. Peel said, he was not surprised that the hon. gentleman should entertain the feelings he had mani-

fested at so barbarous an act as the murder of two British subjects by the Ameer of Bokhara; and independent of the influence of personal feelings arising from private friendship, *he was sure every subject of her Majesty must feel the deepest indignation at such an outrage upon humanity.*

"The government had *not* received any direct *official information,* confirming the *report* of the murder of Colonel Stoddart and Captain Conolly, they had received no direct positive assurance amounting to complete proof of the fact, but as the hon. gentleman had intimated to him his intention to ask this question, he had gone through the whole of the papers, and he confessed the evidence contained in them was so strong, that he feared there could not be a question that, on the 17th of June, 1842, the two officers in question were murdered in a barbarous manner by the orders of the Ameer of Bokhara. Colonel Shiel, in a despatch of the 12th of November, 1842, sent an account given by a Persian of *good character,* of the name of Saaleh Mahomed, who was at Bokhara, giving a circumstantial narrative of the murder of Colonel Stoddart and Captain Conolly. The writer was present *in the town,* and the account which he gave carried with it, certainly, internal evidence of truth. Subsequently *reports* were circulated at Tehran, that the account *was not true;* and it was stated, that a letter had been received from Bokhara, declaring that the *murder of Colonel Stoddart and Captain Conolly had not taken place;* that a Greek and a slave had been murdered, and their bodies exhibited to the people, and a *report* spread, by order of the government, that these were the bodies of two British subjects, but that the two British subjects *were still alive.*

That *report*, received from India, *created a belief that the original account of the murder was incorrect;* but, on referring to the report of Saaleh Mahomed, he found it stated that the murder of the Greek and the slave took place on the 10th of June, and the Persian distinctly stated that Colonel Stoddart and Captain Conolly were put to death on the 17th of June, consequently, he was afraid the countenance given to the contradiction of the report was without foundation. A letter from St. Petersburg, of the 1st of July, stated that inquiries had been made of the envoy of the Khan of Khiva; and the envoy informed Count Nesselrode, in a report, that accounts had reached Khiva from Bokhara, and he entered into details which left no doubt of the truth of the story. That letter was received on the 10th of July, and *therefore* it confirmed the original statement. He had a letter from Colonel Shiel, written at Tehran, in which he transmitted a letter from the chief authority at Bokhara, a Persian, in which *no express reference was made to the murder.* Colonel Shiel said, that this Persian officer demanded a sum of 3500 tomans, as due by Colonel Stoddart, who had lodged with him, and made no reference to the murder, but that this circumstance seemed *confirmatory* of the *report* of the death; as the omission of a direct reference to death was only in conformity with Persian manners. These accounts, therefore, from Tehran and Petersburg appeared to confirm the original report.

"He was sure the hon. gentleman would not press him as to the adoption of the measures, which this country *had a right to press with a view to obtain redress.* He believed *all the civilised world* to whom the matter had been communicated, *participated in our feelings on*

the occasion. The Emperor of Russia had behaved in a manner worthy of a sovereign allied to this country. He had refused to entertain any communication with the Khan of Bokhara, and, when an envoy was sent by the Khan to the Russian government, the emperor refused to hold any communication with him. The Sultan had acted in the same manner; and, therefore, without reference to the *measures that might be taken in consequence of this barbarous murder of British subjects*, he could only state, that he felt the utmost indignation at so atrocious a crime, and he did not despair that, *in some way or other*, punishment would reach the government which had caused it.

"Mr. Cochrane wished to ask whether Captain Conolly, when he went abroad the last time, was employed upon the public service.

"Sir R. Peel BELIEVED NOT."

I beg the reader will have the goodness to compare the foregoing with the following interesting questions and and answer.

"COLONEL STODDART AND CAPTAIN CONOLLY—DR. WOLFF'S MISSION.

"*House of Commons, Friday, June* 28, 1844.

"Mr. B. Cochrane wished to know from the right hon. gentleman whether he had received any direct account from Dr. Wolff, respecting the fate of Colonel Stoddart and Captain Conolly; and he also wished to know whether her Majesty's government had given their support to Dr. Wolff on his mission to Bokhara, and

whether he went into that country with the sanction of her Majesty's government.

"Sir R. Peel said, that Dr. Wolff did not undertake his journey to Bokhara with the direct sanction of her Majesty's government, because their means of working upon the fears of the governor of that country were ineffectual; but they told Dr. Wolff that, if he undertook the journey on his own responsibility, he should receive every assistance that her Majesty's government could afford; and they had an acknowledgment from Dr. Wolff, thanking her Majesty's government for the assistance he had received on his journey from British agents. Communications had been received from Dr. Wolff and Colonel Shiel, her Majesty's representative at Tehran. The letter of Colonel Shiel was dated so recently as the 6th of May, and the letter of Dr. Wolff was dated the 12th of April, at which time he was within three days of Bokhara. Colonel Shiel's letter of the 6th of May contained the information of a native of Tehran, named Jacoob, who was released from captivity at Khokan, near Khiva, by Captain Conolly, whom he accompanied to Bokhara; and, *when the two officers were thrown into prison, he shared their fate,* BEING ACTUALLY IMPRISONED WITH THEM.

"He remained upwards of a year at Bokhara, and witnessed the execution of a Greek servant of Captain Conolly, named Yousouf. During the time that he remained at Bokhara, *no public execution took place, or at least he had not heard of any, and he could not have failed had it taken place.* This Jacoob had a strong hope that Colonel Stoddart was still alive; but he was not so

sanguine as to Captain Conolly, because he was looked upon as a spy.

"It was right to say that *Colonel Shiel did not participate in the hope expressed by this person:* and it was remarkable that two years had now elapsed without the slightest communication from Colonel Stoddart, although previously he had always found means of communicating with British authorities. He could not help fearing that the murder of both these officers *was likely to have taken place;* but still the *most recent accounts confirmed the impression* that *no* public execution had taken place. It was highly probable that the next account would give the impressions of Dr. Wolff on the spot; when they arrived he should be happy to communicate them to the house; but, in the latest account, he was within three days of Bokhara. He feared that it was his duty to discourage the expectation that they would contain assurances of the safety of the two officers.

"Mr. Cochrane said, it would be satisfactory to know how far these officers, at the time when they were imprisoned at Bokhara, were employed in the service of the government.

"Sir R. Peel said that Colonel Stoddart had been authorised to repair to Bokhara, and *was directly employed by the government to make communications at Bokhara.* Captain Conolly had been sent by the Indian government to make communications at Khiva and Khokan. He had no express mission to Bokhara; but an intimation was made to Colonel Stoddart that Captain Conolly was at Khiva, and if he thought he could be useful to him, he had authority to send to him to Khiva. Captain

Conolly had not any direct instructions to proceed to Bokhara. He had authority to go to Khiva; but, acting on his own discretion, and doing that which he believed to be for the service of his country, *he went there when Colonel Stoddart sent for him.*

"Colonel Stoddart had direct official instructions, and Captain Conolly did from a sense of duty repair to Bokhara."

I trust the reader has attentively perused the foregoing parliamentary reports, which I have copied *verbatim* from Hansard's "Parliamentary Debates;" and I have taken the liberty of printing in *italics* those passages to which I wish to direct the reader's particular attention.

Previous notice had been given that these questions would be asked, and Sir Robert Peel says, "As the honourable gentleman had intimated to him his intention to ask the question, *he had gone through the whole of the papers.*"

We will now consider what is the information the right honourable baronet had gained after having "gone through the whole of the papers."

In the first place, Sir R. Peel states distinctly that "government had *not* received any *official information* confirming the *report;*" and yet the name of Lieut.-Colonel Stoddart had been struck out of the army list in March 1843 on the faith of that "*report,*" of which the government had

not in August 1843 received any direct official *information!*

Sir R. Peel, however adds, that at Tehran, from whence the report alluded to came, it was stated that the *account was not true,* and "that a letter had been received from Bokhara declaring that the *murder of Colonel Stoddart and Captain Conolly had not taken place.*" Sir Robert Peel, however, informs the house that he fears he must believe that these two officers were murdered.

Mr. Cochrane then puts a plain, straightforward question, "Was Captain Conolly employed upon the public service?"

Sir R. Peel "BELIEVED NOT!"

Now when a minister of state replies in the House of Commons to a question of which he has received notice, and when he states that "he has gone through all the papers" to prepare himself for an official answer, and when he is asked is such a fact so, and he replies that he "*believed not,*" such an answer is received as a positive denial. There is no question of opinion or belief, but of a mere fact with which the minister was, or ought to have been, well acquainted.

The same question is put to Sir R. Peel on the 28th June, 1844, and he answers thus:—

"Colonel Stoddart had been authorised to repair to Bokhara, and *was directly employed by the government to make communications at Bokhara.* Captain Conolly had been sent by the Indian government to make communications at Khiva and Khokan. He had no express mission to Bokhara, but an intimation was made to Colonel Stoddart that Captain Conolly was at Khiva, and if he thought he could be useful to him he *had authority to send to him* to Khiva. Captain Conolly had not any direct instructions to proceed to Bokhara. He had authority to go to Khiva, but, acting on his own discretion, and doing that which he believed to be for the service of his country, *he went there* when Colonel Stoddart *sent for him.*

"Colonel Stoddart had *direct official instructions*, and Captain Conolly did from a sense of *duty* repair to Bokhara."

Sir R. Peel's long statement may, however, be comprised in a few words.

Colonel Stoddart, her Majesty's representative at Bokhara, had *authority* to direct Captain Conolly's attendance, he exercised that authority, and Captain Conolly of course obeyed him; therefore at Bokhara Captain Conolly was *fulfilling a public duty.*

Now, I will ask, why did not Sir R. Peel give this answer on the 26th August, 1843, instead of denying the mission? The British govern-

ment were as well acquainted with Stoddart and Conolly's mission in 1843 as in 1844. It appears, however, that it was "expedient" for a time to *disavow* these envoys.

At the public meeting at the Crown and Anchor, when I stated that Colonel Stoddart and Captain Conolly were diplomatic agents, my assertion was contradicted, and Sir R. Peel's speech in which he *denied* their official character, was cited, and I was asked if I could possibly know as well as the prime minister. I fear I gave offence to many by positively stating what I *knew* to be the fact, notwithstanding the assertion of Sir R. Peel to the contrary.

The consequence was that these unfortunate men were considered as "*innocent travellers*"—public sympathy was diverted—I was looked upon as a man who had publicly stated the thing that was not—the subscriptions were checked—Dr. Wolff arrived in London to proceed to Bokhara—the committee had only a balance of between 30*l.* and 40*l.* at the banker's, and had I not given Dr. Wolff 500*l.* from my private funds, the expedition would have fallen to the ground, to the great delight of my friends at the Foreign Office.

I do not for a moment imagine that Sir R.

Peel is capable of stating in the House of Commons, or any where else, more or less than he believes to be the exact truth.

When, however, a minister in parliament gets up to answer a question of which he has received notice, he does not rely upon his memory, but comes prepared with an official brief or abstract of the facts upon which he founds his answer. It is, therefore, clear that Sir R. Peel must have had a *false* brief put into his hand on the 24th August, 1843; and I do trust that he will call those persons to account who, to answer their own ends, or to maintain for a time their own opinions, make Sir R. Peel, Prime Minister of the British Empire, appear before the enlightened audience that composes the third power in the British constitution, in the despicable character of — "BIFRONS."*

In the debate of June 28, 1844, the reader will have observed the statement of the man Jacoob, who was *actually imprisoned with Stoddart and Conolly in the dark well.* This man was at

* Bifrons is a character in an old Italian farce, written in the Bolognese dialect; he is a sort of *Mcnechino,* has his face so painted that one side has the expression of grief, while the other is laughing. Bifrons is remarkable for the inaccuracy and evasive prolixity of his statements.

Bokhara during the time of the alleged execution; he, however, says (according to Colonel Shiel's official despatch), "*No public execution took place, or, at least, he had not heard of any, and he could not have failed had it taken place.*" This was satisfactory enough, but at the Foreign Office it must have been considered too satisfactory, for Sir R. Peel adds:—

"It was right to say that *Colonel Shiel did not* participate in the hope expressed by this person."

Now, on the following day, doubting the accuracy of this assertion, I obtained permission to see Colonel Shiel's despatch. He gives the statement nearly in Sir R. Peel's words, but I could not find any expression that could lead me to believe that Colonel Shiel did not participate in Jacoob's hope that Colonel Stoddart *was still alive!* In fact, Colonel Shiel makes no comment whatever.

I will now give the reader Colonel Shiel's despatch from *memory*, and I will venture to say that my version is more correct than Sir R. Peel's, although the right honourable baronet most likely had a copy of the despatch in his hand. The despatch was dated May 6.

Colonel Shiel states that a man named Jacoob had arrived a few days previously, who left Bokhara three months ago. He had been servant to Cap-

tain Conolly, and had been confined in the well with Saleh Mohammed. Was at Bokhara, when Yousouf, called also Augustine, was led outside the town, and he saw his throat cut. This was on a Friday, and the same day mentioned by Saleh Mohammed in *his* account of the execution of Stoddart and Conolly. This account agrees with Rajjib's narrative, reported in Colonel Shiel's former despatch. This man, Jacoob, remained a year at Bokhara after the execution of Yousouf, and did not hear of any execution of the English officers, and no public execution of the English officers could well have taken place without his hearing of it. Believes Colonel Stoddart to be still alive.

On turning over the index to Hansard, I find another debate on the subject.

"COLONEL STODDART AND CAPTAIN CONOLLY.

"*February* 15, 1843.

"Dr. Bowring, seeing the right honourable baronet had just entered the house, hoped he would allow him (Dr. Bowring) to put the question, of which he had given notice, whether the government had received any official account of the murder of Colonel Stoddart and Mr. Conolly at Bokhara?

"Sir R. Peel said that the latest accounts the government had received on the subject to which the honourable gentleman called the attention of the house, were contained in a despatch from Colonel Shiel, dated Tehran,

the 12th of November. In that despatch Colonel Shiel stated several grounds that made it almost impossible to draw any other conclusion than that Colonel Stoddart and Mr. Conolly had been murdered by the Ameer of Bokhara. There was to the despatch a postscript, dated the 23d, in which Colonel Shiel said, that he had seen an *Affghan gentleman, commonly called* KOOMSEDDA, who had been formerly attached to Mr. Conolly, and who had arrived direct from Bokhara. The information brought by this person confirmed the report of the murder. All the interest that the representative of the Emperor of Russia possessed was exercised to save Colonel Stoddart and Mr. Conolly, but in vain. He feared there was every reason to believe that the *report* was but too well founded."

In these extracts from "Hansard's Parliamentary Debates," the reader will have observed that in the two first statements are mentioned Saaleh Mahomed, *a "Persian," of good character.* In the statement of the 15th February they will find a similar confirmatory statement by an *Affghan gentleman,* commonly called Koomsedda.

The reader will not, however, be surprised that the accounts furnished by the Persian of good character, named Saaleh Mahomed, or Mohamed Saleh, should accurately agree with the confirmatory statement of the *Affghan gentleman,* commonly called Koomsedda, when they are informed

that this *Affghan gentleman*, Koomsedda, is no other than their old acquaintance the Persian of "good character," Saaleh Mohamed, or Mahomed Saleh. Such, however, I can assure the reader, is the fact; and in the original statement he is described,—

"Saaleh Mahomed, commonly called Akhoonzadeh."

Thus, "one man in his time plays many parts."

Sir R. Peel, in his answer to Mr. Bowring, states, that "All the interest that the representative of the Emperor of Russia possessed was exercised to save Colonel Stoddart and Captain Conolly, but in vain."

This is not exact. Sir R. Peel has been again misinformed. The Russian envoy left Bokhara on the 17th April, 1842, at which period Colonel Stoddart and Captain Conolly *were both alive;* and since that time his Imperial Majesty has had no representative at Bokhara.

This, probably, may not be a wilful misstatement of the gentlemen at the Foreign Office — they are woefully ignorant of the affairs of Central Asia; and as I never communicated the above fact to them, they were probably not aware when the Russian envoy really did leave.

The reader will not be surprised at the woeful ignorance of the British government of the affairs

in Central Asia, when I inform him that, for some time past, we have had no resident at Meshed; and thus, for the sake of a paltry saving of eight tomans (4*l.*) per month, we remain in ignorance of the important events that are passing in Khorassaun.

It was owing to this paltry saving of four pounds per month, that a rascal like Mohamed Ali Seraaf, the worthy friend of Saleh Mohamed, was enabled to intercept the English letters on their way to Bokhara.

As I purpose, on a future occasion, giving to the public some information on the state and nature of our diplomatic relations with Central Asia, I will merely say that this false statement of the Prime Minister would lead the public naturally to imagine that the Russian representative had also sent a *confirmatory* statement.

I think I have brought forward facts enough to shew the reader that the government has exhibited a most extraordinary anxiety to induce the nation to believe that these envoys have ceased to exist, and that the government has only published intelligence, tending to confirm the opinion they were desirous should be adopted.

The committee constantly received a journal of Dr. Wolff's proceedings, which the doctor will communicate to the public.

CHAPTER IX.

Conduct of the French and English Governments compared—De la Pérouse—Le Chevalier Dillon—Lord Castlereagh and the French Government—Reparation to an English Officer—Decree of the National Assembly concerning De la Pérouse—Name to be retained in the Navy List—Sir Jeremiah Bryant—Resolutions of the Bengal Government—How the French Government rewarded Captain Dillon—Royal Geographical Society—Lords of the Admiralty—Captain Ross a stock-fish—Comments.

CHAPTER IX.

The conduct of the French government in the affair of De la Pérouse forms such a striking contrast to the cruel indifference of the British government in the case of Colonel Stoddart and Captain Conolly, and of the Lords of the Admiralty in the case of the gallant Captain Ross, that I am sure the reader will not be sorry to read the following abridged narrative of Captain Dillon's proceedings.

This gallant officer published a narrative in two volumes, but this has been long since out of print, and I have not been able to obtain a copy at any of the libraries.

While I was inquiring in vain in every quarter for a copy of this interesting work, Captain Dillon did me the honour of introducing himself to me at the Royal Geographical Society; and I am thus enabled to place, in glaring contrast, the noble conduct of the French government with the disgraceful indifference of our own.

It is painful to me as an Englishman and a British officer to draw this degrading comparison; I trust, however, that public opinion may be so expressed, that secretaries of state, "who live at home at ease," may receive an instructive lesson from a half-pay captain; and that they may yet learn that British officers are not to be thrown aside like split pens!

I received my first commission from George the Third. During the reign of that monarch British envoys were safe from insult; or had an insult been offered, an attempt would most certainly have been made to obtain reparation for the injury inflicted upon our national honour. That excellent monarch, whose name is always mentioned with respect, and whose memory will be for ever venerated, that monarch would not have thought himself worthy of the name of king — would have thought his dignities a mere mockery, could he not have protected his ambassadors!

At the Foreign Office they talked to me about the *difficulty* of obtaining reparation from the King of Bokhara, my reply was,—

"These are excellent reasons why Colonel Stoddart and Captain Conolly never should have been sent, but having once sent an envoy, no consideration can ever justify his being abandoned."

Before entering upon the interesting narrative of Captain Dillon's discovery of the remains of La Pérouse's squadron, I will detain the reader a few moments to relate a short anecdote.

A friend of mine, an officer of the Artillery, had met with very unjust treatment from the French authorities while residing in France as "an innocent traveller." He complained to his government. Lord Castlereagh took up the affair; there was a long correspondence, and we were called to the Foreign Office to hear the result.

Lord Castlereagh explained to my friend all that had been done, and the reparation that had been obtained, which his Lordship thought was ample and sufficient.

Seeing my friend still looking far from satisfied, his Lordship thus addressed him :—

"Do you wish, sir, that I should declare war with France for this affair?"

My friend coolly replied, "My Lord, I do, if the reparation my honour requires as a British officer cannot be obtained by any other means."

Constituted as the Foreign Office is at the present moment, what would have been the rejoinder of the Secretary of State?

I firmly believe the answer would have been a

laugh of derision. So, however, did *not* answer Lord Castlereagh.

His reply was: "You are right, sir; full reparation you shall have;"—and full reparation was obtained.

Now for the Count de la Pérouse:—

La Pérouse sailed from Brest in the year 1785, on a voyage of discovery; he reached Botany Bay, after a circuitous voyage, in January, 1788, and in a few months sailed from that port, from which time no authentic intelligence was received of the expedition till the year 1826.

Was *he* abandoned by his government? Never. In consequence of orders from the French government, all the islands in the Pacific were diligently searched by ships of war and traders; and in the year 1793, when renewed efforts were made, the government promised honours and rewards to any person of whatever nation, who should obtain information of La Pérouse, and decreed that the honours and reward should be in proportion to the importance of the information.

M. Lesseps, who accompanied La Pérouse in the Boussole, fortunately left the expedition at Kamschatka, and brought the journals and charts to France.

The National Assembly issued the following decree, which is so highly honourable to the French nation, that I present the reader with a translation of the whole document, which I am sure will be perused with satisfaction by every friend of humanity:—

"*Decree of the National Assembly.*

"*Feb. 9th*, 1791.

"The National Assembly, after having heard the report of its united committees of agriculture, commerce, and naval affairs, decrees:

"That the king be requested to give orders to all ambassadors, residents, consuls, and agents of the nation in foreign countries, to entreat, in the name of humanity and of the arts and sciences, the different sovereigns of the nations in which they reside, to enjoin all navigators and agents of every description under their command, wherever they may be, but particularly in the southern parts of the Pacific Ocean, to make all possible search after the two French frigates, 'La Boussole' and 'L'Astrolabe,' commanded by M. de la Pérouse, and after their crews; as likewise every inquiry that may serve to confirm to us whether they be yet in being, or have been lost; in order that, if M. de la Pérouse and his companions should be found or met with, no matter in what place, every assistance may be given them, and they may be furnished with all possible means of returning to their country, and bringing with them whatever they may have in their possession; the National Assembly engaging to *indemnify*,

and *even to recompense*, according to the importance of the service, every one that may furnish *any assistance* to these navigators, procure intelligence of them, or merely be the cause of restoring to France any papers or effects that may belong, or have belonged, to their expedition.

" It further decrees, that the king be requested to equip one or more vessels, on board which shall be embarked men of science, naturalists, and draughtsmen; and to confer on the commanders of the expedition the double mission of seeking after M. de la Pérouse, in conformity to documents, instructions, and orders which shall be given them, and at the same time of making researches with regard to the sciences and commerce; taking every measure to render the expedition — independently of the search after M. de la Pérouse, or even after they may have found him, or obtained news of him — useful and advantageous to navigation, geography, commerce, arts, and science.

" Collated with the original by us, the President and Secretaries of the National Assembly. Paris, 24th February, 1791.

" Signed " DUPORT, *President.*
" LIORE, } *Secretaries.*"
" BOUISSION, }

On the 22d April, 1791, the National Assembly issued another decree, directing that the accounts and maps of M. de la Pérouse's voyage as far as Botany Bay, and which he had sent home, should be immediately printed at the expense of the nation, and a fund of two millions of francs

(83,333*l.* 6*s.* 8*d.*) was appropriated to that purpose. The whole of the impression, with the exception of such copies as the king might think fit to retain, was to be sent to Madame de la Pérouse, with a copy of the present decree, as a testimony of satisfaction at M. de la Pérouse's devotion to his country. It was also decreed that the name of M. de la Pérouse should *still remain on the Navy List*, and that *his pay should be received by his wife!*

Immediately after the issuing of this decree, two frigates were fitted out at Brest, which were named La Recherche and L'Espérance, General d'Entrecasteaux, as commodore, embarked on board the first, and the command of the second was conferred on Captain Huon de Kermadec.

Some of the survivors of this unfortunate expedition returned to France in March, 1796, after an absence of five years, and M. Labillardière published an account of the disastrous termination of the voyage.

In 1792 or 1793, a deposition was made before the *Juge de Paix* at Morlaix, by George Bowen, commanding the English ship "Albemarle," who stated that in December, 1791, he saw a portion of De la Pérouse's ship floating on the water, on the coast of New Georgia, in the Eastern Ocean. From this time, although every exertion was made by the

French nation, no information was obtained as to the fate of De la Pérouse and his gallant band; and the honour of clearing up this interesting mystery was left for an Englishman, the brave and talented Captain P. Dillon, commander of the East India Company's ship "Research."

In the year 1813, this officer visited the Beetee Islands (commonly called Fejee Islands), and at one of these, a man named Martin Bushart, his wife, then near her confinement, and a Lascar, named Joe, were provided with a variety of seeds, and by their desire, left with the natives, who received them with great kindness, and were most anxious that they should stay. The name of this island was Tucopia.

From 1813 to 1826, nothing was heard of Martin Bushart; in that year, however, Captain Dillon, being on a voyage from Valparaiso and New Zealand towards Bengal, came in sight of Tucopia on the 13th May. Several canoes came off to the ship, and in the foremost he immediately recognised the Lascar Joe, and invited him on board; the next canoe brought Martin Bushart.

This Lascar sold to the armourer of the ship the silver guard of a sword; this being reported to Captain Dillon, immediately excited his attention; and on inquiring of Martin Bushart how they came

by it, he was told that on their first arrival at Tucopia, they found in possession of the natives several ship's iron bolts, chain-plates, axes, knives, China and glass beads, the handle of a silver fork, and many other things; these things he learned had been brought by the natives in their canoes from a distant island called Mannicolo; that two large ships had been wrecked there, and that two of the crew still survived. Captain Dillon was immediately convinced that the two ships wrecked must have been those under the command of the far-famed and lamented De la Pérouse.

Captain Dillon was at this time short of provisions, but when there is the possibility of restoring fellow-creatures to their country, does a British seaman ever consider "expediency?" Fortunately for the honour of humanity, that *diplomatic* word has not yet found a place in the Nautical Dictionary. Captain Dillon says, "Notwithstanding this, I determined to proceed to Mannicolo, and with such means as were in my power, to rescue from the hands of the savages the two survivors, who I had not the least doubt were Frenchmen." Accompanied, therefore, by Bushart and one of the Tucopians, he sailed, and in two days got sight of Mannicolo. The ship, however, was so leaky, that after being driven about seven days without being able

to reach the Island, Captain Dillon put the Tucopian into a canoe, and reluctantly bore away with a light wind for Calcutta, Martin Bushart still remaining on board with him.

On his arrival at Bengal, Captain Dillon applied to the Indian Government for assistance, offering to proceed immediately to the Mannicolos to ascertain all the facts and particulars relative to the shipwrecks. Fortunately the Bengal officials were not educated in Downing Street, and the Company's ship-of-war "Ternate," then lying at Rangoon with her commander, were placed under his orders; a Government steam-boat was appointed to take him with his party to Rangoon, and he was informed that it was the wish of the Vice-President in Council, Lord Combermere, that he should be despatched as soon as possible.

At this period Captain Dillon had the good fortune to meet at the Asiatic Society's Rooms in Chouringhee, Major-General Sir Jeremiah Bryant, C.B. (at that time Colonel Bryant); and I cannot allow this opportunity to pass without thanking this distinguished officer for the kind assistance he has afforded me in my efforts to ascertain the fate of Colonel Stoddart and Captain Conolly; and when the reader considers that the same feeling which induced this truly philanthropic Christian

and distinguished General to exert himself in behalf of Captain Dillon's mission, induced him also to preside at the public meeting which was called to despatch Dr. Wolff, I think he will be induced to pardon this digression. Colonel Bryant then, to return to my narrative, moved, that a deputation of the Asiatic Society should wait upon the Vice-President in Council, to recommend that steps should be taken to rescue the survivors of the Count de la Pérouse's expedition from the islands where they were supposed to have been shipwrecked.

This motion was *unanimously* adopted, and the President, the Honourable J. H. Harington, who was also a member of the Supreme Council, said, in an address from the chair, that Colonel Bryant's motion should have his cordial support, and that he had reason to believe that arrangements were making by the Marine Board in consequence of orders from the Vice-President in Council, which would fulfil their desires.

In consequence of the difficulty of victualling the "Ternate" at Rangoon, Captain Dillon was offered the command of the Company's ship "Research," which happened to arrive at that moment from Rangoon, and this offer he immediately accepted.

I have now before me the thirteen resolutions agreed to by the Council of our Indian Empire, which are dated 16th November, 1826, *forty years* after the loss of De la Pérouse's vessels. I will only extract the first:—

"Resolution I.—Upon a mature consideration of all the circumstances set forth in the correspondence above recorded, the Vice-President in Council is satisfied that the facts which have been laid before Government by Captain Dillon are sufficient to justify the *hope*, that if proper measures are adopted, some certain information may be obtained in regard to the loss of the French frigates 'Boussole' and 'Astrolabe,' commanded by the celebrated Count de la Pérouse, whose fate, notwithstanding the most anxious inquiries during a period of nearly *forty years*, has never yet been ascertained."

Resolutions were also passed allowing sums to be expended for the purpose of the expedition, and granting to Captain Dillon 6000 rupees as a compensation for his services; and he was directed, in case he should fall in with the French corvette, "L'Astrolabe," which was despatched from Toulon in April 1825, under the command of Captain Dumont d'Urville, for the purpose of exploring the coast of New Guinea and New Zealand, with a view of discovering the spot where Count de la Pérouse perished, to acquaint the commander of

that vessel with the destination and object of the "Research," and with the grounds for supposing that the French frigates under the command of M. de la Pérouse were wrecked on, or in the vicinity of, the Mannicolo Islands.

On the 11th January, 1827, Captain Dillon sailed from Calcutta on his interesting expedition, and remained some time at Van Dieman's Land.

On quitting Van Dieman's Land, Captain Dillon touched at Port Jackson, to endeavour to procure a person to accompany the expedition as naturalist. Being disappointed in this object, he sailed to New Zealand, where he had some difficulty in preserving two of his passengers,—a young New Zealand chief and his attendant, from the maws of his countrymen; the tribe in the Bay of Islands, being at war with the tribe to which those persons belonged, and having lately sustained a defeat with the loss of one of their chiefs. Captain Dillon, however, was able to secure the safety of his guests, without exciting the angry passions of the hostile savages.

From New Zealand, Captain Dillon proceeded to Tonga. Here, he heard of the French vessel "L'Astrolabe," which, I have already stated, was despatched from France, to examine the islands in

these seas, for any of the survivors of La Pérouse's expedition.

From Tonga, Captain Dillon sailed to Tucopia, where he obtained a pilot to Mannicolo, and reached that island on the 13th September.

Here he remained some time, surveying the island, and communicating with the natives, whose information corroborated that obtained on his former voyage.

A chief named Owallie, a man about fifty-five years of age, informed Captain Dillon, that a long time ago, the people of this island, upon coming out one morning, saw part of a ship on the reef opposite Paiow, where it held together till the middle of the day, when it was broken by the sea, fell to pieces, and large fragments of it floated on shore along the coast. The ship got on the reef during the night, when it blew a tremendous hurricane. Four men were saved from this wreck, one of whom made a present to a chief, and their lives were spared. None of these men were chiefs: they remained a short time with Owallie's tribe, and then joined their comrades at Paiow, who built a small ship there, and sailed away. The same night another ship struck on a reef and went down. There were several men saved from her, who built a little

ship, and sailed away five moons after the shipwreck. While building the small ship they had a great fence of trees round them, to keep off the islanders, who being equally afraid of them, scarcely any intercourse was kept up between them. The islanders considered these strangers to be spirits; and some were described as having noses above a foot long. Captain Dillon imagines it must have been the cocked-hats of the officers worn "fore and aft," that were taken for noses. Two white men remained behind, when the rest went away; the one was a chief, the other a common man, who used to attend upon the white chief, who died about three years before Captain Dillon's arrival.

The chief with whom the white man resided was obliged to fly from his country, and the white man accompanied him. The only white people, or foreigners, the inhabitants of this island had ever seen were, the people of the wrecked ships, and Captain Dillon's crew.

The natives pointed out the spot on the southern reef where one vessel struck, and went down in deep water, the other being thrown upon the reef, many escaped.

In proof of the truth of their statements, the natives brought an immense collection of articles of French manufacture, among which were a silver

candlestick, with the arms of a gentleman who was attached to La Pérouse's expedition as a naturalist engraved upon it; the handle of a silver sword; and a variety of other things. But the most satisfactory evidence was obtained from the reef, where articles too ponderous to be removed by the natives were found by Captain Dillon himself. These were brass guns, the iron tiller, and two ships' bells, bearing the inscription, "*Bazin m'a fait*," and the royal arms of France.

Thus did our gallant countryman Dillon clear up that question, so interesting to humanity and science; and I will venture to predict, that the name of Dillon will go down to posterity associated with that of Pérouse.

Captain Dillon having thus fulfilled the objects of his expedition, shaped his course for Calcutta, where he arrived on the 7th April, 1827; and was received with great distinction by the Governor-General.

Captain Dillon now proceeded to Paris, where new honours awaited him. His Majesty Charles X. created him a *Knight of the Legion of Honour, presented him with a sum sufficient to defray the expenses of his voyage to Europe, granted him an annuity of* 4000 *francs per annum for his own life, with a reversion of one-half of that sum to his fa-*

mily; and appointed the Chevalier Dillon to a consulship.

All this is as it should be.

I trust the reader will pause a moment, to compare the solicitude of the French government on behalf of La Pérouse and his comrades, with the cool indifference of my Lord Aberdeen, and the British government, as to the fate of their two envoys, Colonel Stoddart and Captain Conolly.

After a pause of a few minutes, to allow their indignation to cool down a degree or two, I will ask my readers to compare the conduct of the French government towards La Pérouse, with the conduct of the British government towards Captain Ross, when the whole nation (with the exception of the officials) was in a fever of anxiety as to the fate of that distinguished officer and his gallant band, who had been some years blocked up in the ice.

I extract the following from a printed report of what took place at a meeting of the Royal Geographical Society, on the 11th October, 1844:—

"MR. MURCHISON, THE PRESIDENT, IN THE CHAIR.

"At the close of the discussion on Dr. Beke's paper, the President, seeing Captain Grover amongst them, called the attention of the meeting to the great probability of the existence of Colonel Stoddart, a valued member of their Society: he (the president) recollected when

Captain Ross had been above three years blocked up in the ice, going to the Admiralty with some scientific men, to urge the authorities to take measures to ascertain the fate of that officer and his gallant band: the reply he received was this: '*It is well for you scientific gentlemen to form an opinion on a subject with which you are totally unacquainted: we can tell you that Captain Ross is as dead as a stock-fish!*'"

As dead as a Stock-fish!

In the case of Captain Ross, as the government was shabby enough to allow the expenses of that expedition, undertaken for a national purpose, to be paid for out of the funds of a generous, patriotic, private individual, they might, certainly, without encumbering their consciences with a lie, say he was an "innocent traveller."

The nation, however, began to murmur about the cruel abandonment of poor Ross; and at last an expedition *was* sent after these "*stock-fishes*," which arrived just "in time to be too late;" for Ross, relying upon his own exertions, had contrived to work his way out of the ice just as the Admiralty expedition had worked its way in.

CHAPTER X.

Author suspects the Government intends to abandon Dr. Wolff —Committee address Lord Aberdeen—Reply—Author goes to St. Petersburg—Interview with the British Minister—Letter from the Committee to the Emperor—Count Woronzow—Russian Police—Admiral Krusenstern—Lieutenant Raper—General Peroffsky—Admiral Krusenstern's Letter and Medal—Author leaves St. Petersburg—The Inability of the British Minister—Puzzling Questions by Russian Officers.

CHAPTER X.

"Yet shame and honour might prevail
To keep thee thus from turning tail:
For who would grudge to spend his cash in
His Honor's cause? (Quoth she) 'A pudding.'"

HUDIBRAS.

I BEGAN now to entertain serious apprehensions that the British government intended abandoning Dr. Wolff to his fate. The Committee assembled to deliberate upon the noble-minded doctor's perilous position, and I was directed to address the following letter to the Secretary of State:—

"*Army and Navy Club,*
"*August* 26, 1844.

"The Committee of the Stoddart and Conolly Fund, having reflected upon all the circumstances that have been communicated to them concerning the miserable fate of Lieutenant-Colonel Stoddart, Captain Conolly, and Lieutenant Wyburd, all British officers, employed in the service of their country on diplomatic missions:

considering, that whatever efforts have been made by her Majesty's government for the relief of these officers, such efforts have been ineffective: considering, also, that Dr. Wolff's claim to the protection of the British government, is merely that of being a British subject imprisoned by a foreign power while engaged on lawful business, which, however, has heretofore been considered as all-sufficient, and that the sovereign is as much bound to avenge the wrongs of such citizen, to punish the aggressor, and oblige him to make full reparation, as the citizen was bound in allegiance to the sovereign.

"Maturely reflecting upon all these points, the Committee request the Earl of Aberdeen to have the goodness distinctly to state, how far they may reckon upon the immediate and authoritative interference of her Majesty's government for the release of Dr. Wolff, now imprisoned at Bokhara. In case her Majesty's government cannot give an assurance of such interference, the Committee beg leave to inform the Earl of Aberdeen, that Captain Grover has proposed to start immediately to St. Petersburg, to endeavour to interest the Emperor of Russia in the fate of Dr. Wolff, that the Committee have accepted his offer, and they request the Earl of Aberdeen will have the goodness to grant him the necessary passport, a letter to her Majesty's representative at the Imperial court, and such other assistance as his Lordship may be disposed to grant.

"By order of the Committee,

"*The Right Hon.*
"*The Earl of Aberdeen,*
"*&c. &c. &c.*
"*Secretary of State.*

"JOHN GROVER,
"Captain Unattached,
"President."

In reply, Lord Aberdeen informs the committee that "her Majesty's government unfortunately do not possess the means of exercising that direct and authoritative interference with the Ameer of Bokhara to which you refer." Lord Aberdeen strongly dissuades any person from proceeding to Bokhara under present circumstances, but kindly says, that he will readily grant me a passport for St. Petersburg, and "*every other facility in his power.*"

It was now determined, that as the British government was unwilling or unable to take authoritative measures for the relief of Dr. Wolff, that we should seek the protection of the Emperor of Russia. We felt that it was an extraordinary measure for Englishmen to apply to a foreign sovereign for the relief of a British subject. No time, however, was to be lost, and we were not disposed to lose any chance of saving the excellent Dr. Wolff, by further discussing questions of diplomatic expediency, or the present, or ulterior effect of the extraordinary measures we were about to adopt. Our duty was to leave no means untried to save Dr. Wolff, our envoy, and no one could suggest any other means than an application to the Emperor of Russia.

It will, moreover, be seen, that the Secretary of

State, so far from disapproving the plan we had adopted, promised the assistance of the British minister at St. Petersburg.

Having received my passport, and despatches for the British minister at St. Petersburg, which were left open for my perusal, I left London on the 11th of September, and, by travelling night and day, I reached St. Petersburg on the seventh day.

I had heard that the emperor was much afflicted at the loss of his daughter, and feared this circumstance might prevent the interview I had come so far to seek. The first person, however, to whom I spoke on the subject, told me that an English traveller had been received about ten days previously. This gentleman lost a gold medal in his way to the palace, and a reward of two hundred roubles had been advertised in the newspapers for its recovery.

I immediately left my dispatches, with a copy of the letter for the emperor, at the British embassy; and on the following day I was honoured with a visit from the minister, who, to my surprise, told me that he did not think I should obtain an interview with the emperor, who did not see any one.

I reminded him of the English gentleman who had been received. He replied, "That is very true, but I can assure you his Majesty does not receive

us." I asked Mr. Bloomfield if he could introduce me to any person who had been at Bokhara; he regretted he could not do so.

On the 21st I dined at the British embassy; and the minister told me he had arranged an interview with Count Woronzow; that he thought I had better give to him the letter from the committee, as there was little probability of my seeing the emperor.

On the 23d I had an interview with Count Woronzow, in the presence of Mr. Bloomfield. I handed to him a copy of the following letter from the committee, which he read attentively:—

"*The Committee of the Stoddart and Conolly Fund to His Imperial Majesty the Emperor of all the Russias.*

"May it please your Majesty,

"The Committee of the Stoddart and Conolly Fund, appointed at a public meeting, aware of the great interest your Majesty has shewn in behalf of Colonel Stoddart and Captain Conolly, British officers employed on a diplomatic mission at Bokhara, are emboldened to solicit your Majesty's gracious sympathy in behalf of Dr. Wolff, who, animated solely by Christian benevolence, proceeded to Bokhara in the hopes of obtaining the release of those unfortunate men, and who is now himself a captive in that country without any prospect of release. Dr. Wolff states, in a letter to his wife, the Lady Georgiana, that he

has ransomed several Christians from slavery, and among the number ten of your Majesty's subjects.

"The King of Bokhara having officially declared to this committee, through Dr. Wolff, that he had put Colonel Stoddart and Captain Conolly to death in July, 1843, it would be inconsistent with the dignity of the British government to enter into a negotiation with a sovereign who has openly avowed that he had put two of its ambassadors to death.

"The Committee have been informed that your Majesty has recently had an ambassador at Bokhara, and they venture to hope, that should your Majesty be graciously pleased to order a letter to be written to the Ameer, urging the immediate release of Dr. Wolff, that it might be the means of restoring that gentleman to his family, and whatever might be the result of such a step, your Majesty's kind and humane consideration would be gratefully appreciated by the whole British nation.

"The Committee have directed their president to request permission to present this to your Imperial Majesty.

"In the name, and by order of the Committee,
"JOHN GROVER, Capt. Unatt.
"*London*, F.R.S., F.R.A.S.
"*Sept.* 2, 1844. "President of the Committee."

Count Woronzow read slowly and attentively the copy of the committee's letter, which I informed his Excellency I was instructed to deliver in person, if his Imperial Majesty would kindly honour me

with an audience. Count Woronzow's reply was the same as that of the British minister, but in a different language—French. Being prepared for this, I drew from my pocket a private letter, from myself to the emperor, stating my reasons for undertaking so long a journey at this inclement season, and requesting the honour of an audience. This I presented to Count Woronzow, and also a copy, which he read with great attention, assured me it should be presented to the emperor, that his Majesty's pleasure should be communicated to the British minister, that it would be extremely difficult to obtain for me the interview I desired; and that he did not see how they could assist me, as all intercourse with Bokhara had been broken off for some time. At the close of the interview I informed Count Woronzow that I should be exceedingly obliged to him, if he could put me in communication with any persons who had been at Bokhara, as I was most anxious to obtain any information concerning the British envoys. His Excellency's reply was, "*Je n'en connais personne.*"

Many Russians of rank and influence had told me that had I come to St. Petersburg without despatches, I should have had no difficulty in obtaining an audience with the emperor, and that the question "to be or not to be" had been settled

in Downing Street before my departure: that Count Nesselrode and Count Woronzow would not at the present moment do any thing that would be disagreeable to Lord Aberdeen.

When, therefore, I coupled Count Woronzow's answer, "he did not know any one who had been at Bokhara," with the English minister's, that he could not forward my wishes on this point, knowing, as I did, that the very person I wanted to see from Bokhara had very recently had an interview with the latter gentleman, I had, I must confess, considerable difficulty in preserving any thing like a becoming diplomatic gravity; and if these gentlemen could have been aware of the extent of my knowledge at that moment, I think they would have given me credit for having profited by my numerous recent visits to Downing Street. The probability, however, is, that these gentlemen were as well aware of the extent of my knowledge as I was myself, for at St. Petersburg they know every thing, and they certainly take most extraordinary means of acquiring knowledge; of this I will give the reader one example.

On board the steam-boat from Hamburg I happened to meet Lady ——. At St. Petersburg we engaged apartments in the same hotel.

A few days after my arrival, a very elegant,

gentlemanlike man addressed me in the street by name. I was puzzled to make out where I had seen this man before. He spoke French with a Parisian accent, and was perfectly *comme il faut.*

After some commonplace talk, he turned half round with the gravest face in the world, and said,—

"Captain, might I take the liberty of asking you two or three questions about Lady ——, with whom you are travelling?"

"Sir, I do not understand you," I replied in astonishment.

"Oh!" he replied, "I beg your pardon, I am afraid you will think I have taken too great a liberty, but I am Monsieur ——, of the secret police, and I am directed by the Emperor to make the inquiry."

Instead of being angry, I had now a difficulty to refrain from laughing outright; I, however, preserved my gravity, and suggested, that my questioner had better address himself to her ladyship. My reply seemed very embarrassing, and I then said, "Since the Emperor is so desirous of obtaining some information about Lady ——, although I must decline answering any questions, still I think I can assist you. Walk with me to my residence, I will then tell her ladyship your wish, and she probably may be disposed to see you."

My new acquaintance thanked me most warmly: holding up his hand, a handsome carriage drove up, which it appears had been following us without my being aware of it; we got in; he told the driver our destination; the horses started off full gallop, and in a short time we were at my hôtel. I left my new acquaintance in my salon, and on proceeding to Lady ——'s apartment, I found, as I expected, that her ladyship was amused with the adventure, and readily accompanied me to my salon, with her niece. On introducing her ladyship, the stranger looked at me, as if he expected I should withdraw; this, however, I was by no means disposed to do; and I think I shewed a little diplomatic tact in arranging the interview in my apartment instead of her ladyship's. A long pause ensued, then the gentleman commenced a long string of apologies, which, however, I cut short, by telling him that I had said to her ladyship all that was necessary in the shape of apology, and begged he would put his questions. The only question he had to put was, whether her ladyship was related to Count ——, who commanded one of the Russian provinces!

This afforded us much laughter.

On reflecting upon my interviews with Count Woronzow and the English minister, I saw that I

should not obtain any assistance or information from them.

I had fortunately with me a clever German servant, who spoke Russian, but not a word of French or English. On my return to my quarters, I thus addressed him: "I have reason to be satisfied with your fidelity; you must now give me a proof of your intelligence. Go, Johann, ascertain in what part of Russia General Peroffsky is at present, and find out the address of Admiral Krusenstern."

Johann started off like a flash of lightning; in half an hour he returned, wiping the perspiration from his brow, although it was snowing heavily at the time.

"I have executed my mission. General Peroffsky has a residence in St. Petersburg: he is at present in the country, but will return in three days. Here," handing me a bit of paper, "here is the address of Admiral Krusenstern, who is at home. I saw him at the window five minutes ago, looking at a dog attacked by some pigeons."

I drove immediately to Admiral Krusenstern, the celebrated navigator, who is looked upon as the father of the Russian navy. I took with me, as a present, the second edition of Lieutenant Raper's work on Navigation. In case the admiral should

not be "visible," I had addressed a note to him in French. My servant, on inquiry, was told the admiral was to be seen, and having sent in the book and my note, I followed.

I found the admiral in uniform, and not being aware that he spoke English, I addressed him in French, told him that I had been charged by Lieutenant Raper to present his work on Navigation, &c. The admiral listened to my address, and then said, in a very stiff manner, "Est-ce que vous connaissez le Lieutenant Raper?"

"Si je le connais? C'est un de mes amis le plus intime!"

"Comment, votre ami? Vous êtes capitaine de la marine Française, n'est-ce pas?"

"Pardon, Monsieur l'Amiral, je suis capitaine de l'armée Anglaise."

"Well!" broke out the admiral, in English, "bless my soul, if I did not take you for a Frenchman."

The excellent man then took me cordially by the hand, and asked my name (he had not yet opened my note); when he heard it, he immediately asked if I were the Captain Grover who had taken so much interest in the fate of Colonel Stoddart and Captain Conolly, and I then found that he was well

acquainted with all that had been done, and that he took the liveliest interest in the fate of those wretched men.

I found the admiral already possessed of the first edition of Lieutenant Raper's work, of which he spoke highly. He could not at all understand how Lieutenant Raper, who had devoted his whole life to the improvement of nautical science, who had produced a work that was an honour to England,—he could not at all understand, I say, how Lieutenant Raper should still be *Lieutenant* Raper. "I know," said that excellent man, "that your Geographical Society has given that talented officer their gold medal, but what has the Government done for Lieutenant Raper?"

"Nothing, absolutely nothing!" was my sad reply; and I felt humiliated, as an Englishman, at making such an avowal to a foreigner.

I trust my good friend, Lieutenant Raper, will excuse my thus bringing his name before the public. I do not do it on his account. I know that he is satisfied to pass his days, and even his nights, anxiously employed in advancing his country's glory, by perfecting nautical knowledge, and thus adding to the safety of our navy and commercial marine.

Had Lieutenant Raper been a Russian, a

Frenchman,' or any thing but an Englishman, he would not have been allowed to remain a half-pay lieutenant. But here in England, I would wager a day's pay, that if the subject were mentioned to Sir Robert Peel, the prime minister of this powerful nation, he would reply, "Who is Lieutenant Raper? I never heard of such a person." Of course, the right honourable baronet never did!

From Admiral Krusenstern I received the kindest attention during the whole period of my stay at St. Petersburg. At the time of my departure, the admiral was confined to his bed by illness. I wrote to thank him for the many marks of kindness I had received from him, and to take my leave. At the moment of my departure for Stettin, an orderly brought me the following letter:—

"*To Captain John Grover,*

"*President of the Committee of the Stoddart and Conolly Fund.*

"Dear Sir,

"Your letter has disappointed me in more than one respect. If you are off to-day, I certainly must renounce the pleasure of seeing you.

"Present my best respects to your friend, Lieutenant Raper, and to the excellent Captain Beaufort. As soon as I am well enough, I will write to both of them.

"To Mr. Raper I send the book he wished to have, and I beg of you to accept the medal (*which was delivered to me by the fleet on the 50th anniversary of my service in*

the Navy) as a small token of the pleasure I have had in meeting you here, and of my highest regard for your noble character.

"To meet you again will ever make happy

"Yours, &c.,

"KRUSENSTERN.

"*St. Petersburg*, 23*d Sept.* 1844."

The above letter being addressed to me as President of the Committee has been noted on the official minutes, and may, therefore, be considered as a public document.

In publishing this letter now, I am certainly gratifying a feeling of personal pride, and I hope the English reader will think such pride legitimate.

Whenever I look at the beautiful medal that accompanied the above letter, it is with a feeling of great exultation.

I have, besides, another object in relating the above circumstance, that is, to shew the people of England how the conduct of those who exerted themselves in behalf of Colonel Stoddart and Captain Conolly is appreciated in *foreign* countries; and I will only add that Admiral Krusenstern's present more than compensated me for all the anxieties, fatigue, and expense of my journey. The account of my interview with General Peroffsky, the reader has already seen. Of the numerous

other visits I received, I make no mention for obvious reasons, and for the same reason, also, I pass over in silence other interesting events that occurred to me during my residence in Russia.

Time passed on pleasantly enough, but I was anxious to return home, and as the next steam-boat to Stettin would be the last, I began to be impatient at not receiving an answer from the emperor. It appeared to me that if his majesty did not intend seeing me, he might signify this at once, and allow me to depart.

On the 4th October, I wrote to the British minister, informing him that business required my attendance in England, and that I should start by the steam-boat on the following day for Stettin, without his majesty's answer, and report the ill success of my mission to my constituents.

That same evening the minister called upon me, and told me that he had seen Count Woronzow, who informed him that the emperor regretted that he could not see me, but that he would do every thing in his power for Dr. Wolff.

The following day I left St. Petersburg, and sent to Mr. Bloomfield, by a friend, the committee's letter to the emperor, with a request that he would have the goodness to forward to London his imperial majesty's answer.

No answer has been received as yet; and the receipt of the letter has not been acknowledged by the Russian government, or even by the British embassy.

From Mr. Bloomfield, the British minister, I experienced the greatest kindness. From my first interview with him I saw he was in a *fausse position;* and that the feelings of the man—the English gentleman, were sometimes struggling with—something else. Mr. Bloomfield was most courteous, most polite; was willing to do any thing in his power; but it unfortunately happened, that every thing I asked him to do, he was obliged to refuse. For instance, that my journey might not be fruitless, I expressed a wish to visit the military establishments at St. Petersburg, where I might pick up some useful professional knowledge. The British minister, however, had not the power to assist me even in this!

Many persons at St. Petersburg told me that Stoddart and Conolly had been intentionally abandoned by the British government; but that they were still alive. I was told, that the moment the Ameer heard of Dr. Wolff's intended expedition to Bokhara, he had these officers conveyed to Samarcand, and circulated a report that they were dead. St. Petersburg is much frequented

by Bokhara merchants. The English consul-general told me he could readily have obtained information from these merchants had he been instructed so to do; but not having received such instructions, he had not made any inquiries!

I found most of the officers in Russia well acquainted with the cruel case of Colonel Stoddart and Captain Conolly; and in Germany, the fate of these wretched men was a subject of general conversation. I scarcely ever took up a newspaper without meeting with a paragraph on the subject. An account of my mission to St. Petersburg had found its way into the German newspapers; and I was not a little amused to see myself,—a poor half-pay captain—described as "*der reiche Engländer*."

At Berlin, the names of all the inmates of the hôtels are affixed in the entrance-hall; and all the arrivals are announced daily in a journal; and when I made my appearance at the *table d'hôte*, I was overwhelmed with questions as to the motives of the British government in thus abandoning their ambassadors.

When I have reasoned with Russian officers against their opinion, that Colonel Stoddart and Captain Conolly were intended to be sacrificed by the British government, I have been met with the

following questions, which I have been obliged to confess my inability to answer:—

"I. Why were not efforts made to recover these officers when we were in possession of Cabul?

"II. When Sir Richmond Shakespeare was at Khiva, was he instructed to attempt their release, or to gain information concerning them? and, if not, why not?

"III. Why were they not claimed as *envoys* instead of '*innocent travellers*,' which was to declare them spies?

"IV. Why did the British government send these officers, and then disavow and abandon them?

"V. Why did not the Queen of England answer the Ameer's letter, instead of directing the Secretary of State so to do, as every one with the slightest acquaintance of Oriental affairs must be well aware, that no attention whatever is given to the signature of any Vizier or Minister; and that such an answer would be received as an unpardonable insult?"

CHAPTER XI.

Defence of an absent Individual.

CHAPTER XI.

BEFORE bringing this narrative to a conclusion, a sense of justice compels me to say a few words in defence of an absent individual, who will probably never have an opportunity of defending himself,—that individual is the King of Bokhara. The English newspapers have heaped their whole stock of opprobrious epithets on the head of that monarch. It is natural enough that every Englishman's blood should boil with indignation, when he thinks of the ignominious treatment to which such a man as Colonel Stoddart has been subjected since the year 1838 by the orders of Nasr Ullah, King of Bokhara. It is, indeed, natural, that the whole British nation should be indignant; but, in my humble opinion, this virtuous indignation is misdirected, that it is not the King of Bokhara who is to be blamed for these cruelties, but the BRITISH GOVERNMENT!

Let us consider coolly the plain facts of the case.

In the year 1838, a British officer presents himself, stating, that he is an *Eelchie* (ambassador) from the sovereign of Great Britain. He brings no letter from the sovereign he says he represents; and, therefore, naturally becomes suspected. He is imprisoned, released, taken into favour, again imprisoned, to be again set at liberty. Years roll on, still this man who calls himself an ambassador is not claimed by his sovereign. The King of Bokhara, barbarian as he has been called, cannot imagine that any sovereign, much less a *Christian Queen*, should send an envoy, and allow him to remain so many years unclaimed. Therefore, this same Colonel Stoddart must be a spy; and, by the laws of all Eastern nations, deserving of death.

With our pretence of civilisation, a spy caught within our lines is hung by the provôt-marshal, "sans autre forme de procès." Who has not heard of the fate of the unfortunate Major André, who was hung on suspicion of being a spy?

Thus, however, did not proceed the King of Bokhara. He waited from the year 1838 to 1842, for the arrival of Colonel Stoddart's so-often-promised letters; in that year becoming impatient, as all the grandees of his kingdom were urging him to

put Stoddart to death, he sent for that unfortunate envoy, who repeated the old story of the expected letters, and asked the king to wait three months, when the letters certainly would arrive; the king immediately not only granted this request, but had post-houses established as far as the Persian frontier, to expedite the arrival of these letters, which never came, for the best of all possible reasons, because they never were sent!

The only official letter that reached was the never-to-be-forgotten epistle of the Governor-General of India, Lord Ellenborough, claiming Colonel Stoddart and Captain Conolly as "innocent travellers;" that is, declaring them to be impostors and spies: the king, however, according to Dr. Wolff's official letter, waited until the month of July, 1843, and then had these "innocent travellers" executed.

How is it, I say again, and again, that during so many years the fate of these brave men was allowed to remain a mystery? A Doctor Wolff could have been as readily found in 1840, 1841, or 1842, as in 1843; one thing alone was wanting—a willing Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs.

Dr. Wolff had much to endure at Bokhara, because he had no authority from the government. To state that he was sent such a distance by some private individuals, to inquire about two men who

had been abandoned so many years by their government, was enough to awaken suspicion.

Had Lord Aberdeen been desirous of obtaining any information concerning these wretched men, he would at any time have found a dozen volunteers, well qualified and willing for the task; it is, therefore, clear, that his Lordship did not wish to hear any thing further on the subject.

This abandonment of British officers will have a bad—a demoralising effect on the army and navy. That effect may not be apparent for some time; but, as sure as the moisture that is drawn from the earth by evaporation will descend, so surely will the wicked, unnatural conduct of the British government be visited upon the nation.

What a thorough contempt will the tribes and governments of Central Asia have for "*Dowlat*," as they call the British government! The last attack upon Cabul raised us wonderfully in the estimation of these people; but should the cruelties practised upon Colonel Stoddart and Captain Conolly pass unavenged, the word "Dowlat" will have a new signification—contempt and infamy.

Lord Aberdeen submits to this degradation, probably from a dread of offending Russia, and from a desire of maintaining peace. The contemptible position in which our Secretary of State

has placed our relations with Central Asia must indeed be highly gratifying to the Autocrat; and any effort of ours to wipe off the infamy that is now coupled with the name of "*Doulat*" will, I am quite sure, be especially displeasing to the Emperor."

In the House of Commons, on the 24th August, 1843, Sir Robert Peel said, in allusion to the report of the murder, "He believed all the civilised world to whom the matter had been communicated participated in our feelings on the occasion. The Emperor of Russia had behaved in a manner worthy of a sovereign allied to this country. He had refused to entertain any communication with the Khan of Bokhara; and when an envoy was sent by the Khan to the Russian government, the Emperor refused to hold any communication with him. The Sultan had acted in the same manner; and, therefore, without reference to the measures that might be taken in consequence of this barbarous murder of British subjects, he could only state, that he felt the utmost indignation at so atrocious a crime; and he did not despair, that in *some way or other*, punishment would reach the government which had caused it."

Now, this proper, statesmanlike language was received with cheers by the House of Commons,

and exultation out of the House. But it was mere talk—bluster, intended to produce a momentary effect, and to check discussion.

Sir Robert Peel expressed himself in a similar manner, when the disgraceful imprisonment of our national representative at Otaheite was discussed; and it ended by Mr. Pritchard's receiving an indemnity for the fat pigs and potatoes which had been stolen from him!

Can Lord Aberdeen really believe that such conduct can preserve peace for any length of time? Or does his Lordship limit his views to the probable period that he may retain possession of the portfolio of Foreign Affairs, and therefore only pray, "Give peace in our time?" His Lordship may certainly succeed in keeping peace in his time, that is, if his time be extremely brief, but the nation may rely upon it, his Lordship is preparing the way for long and expensive wars, and that we shall be worried into a fight, when we are the least prepared for it, without having to maintain any other principle than that of mere self-preservation.

During the three-and-thirty years that I have been in the army, I have made the subject of quarrels and the horrible practice of duelling an especial study, and have been the happy means of arranging very many affairs of this kind of a very

peculiar character. One of the results of my investigation is this: that a really brave man (brave men are never quarrelsome) passes through a chequered life without ever having occasion to fight a duel; while the timid man, who is anxious to avoid quarrels, is always engaged in them. Why is this? My answer is, that the number of cowards is much greater than is supposed; men being generally desirous of receiving credit for those very qualities in which they are the most deficient; as soon as an unfortunate being obtains an established reputation for cowardice, his companions, who have had the art to conceal their weakness, will endeavour to establish their reputation on his downfal and disgrace. Thus is it with beings called intelligent. Let us descend a step in the creation and consider instinct.

Suppose a strange, but quiet, peace-loving, conciliating, cowardly cur arrives in a country village, he has a timid look, and appears most anxious to avoid giving offence to its canine inhabitants; he allows his tail to hang quietly between his legs, hangs down his ears, sneaks as quietly as possible through the village, without looking to the right or left, and so far from giving any offence, he pretends not to perceive the insulting sneers of the cowardly curs that are basking in the sun at the ale-house

door. The doom of that unfortunate hound is sealed. He will have to fight for his life.

Suppose now an English bull-dog has to traverse the village. A brave dog, having no wish to quarrel with any of his race, but determined not to put up with insult. The curs, elated with having worried the first stranger, exult in the idea that they are really brave, and an impudent puppy utters an insulting snarl as the new comer passes on. The bull-dog suddenly stops, walks, in a calm, dignified manner, towards the snarler, and merely says, "Is that intended as an insult to me?" "By no means," is the humble reply; "I have an asthmatic wheezing in my throat, and beg your worship's pardon for having attracted your attention."

A duel is seldom or never fought between two brave men, in most instances one or both the combatants are cowards.

Some years ago the government of the United States was desirous that France should pay the sum it was acknowledged was owing to the States. The demand was made in such very plain language, that the Chamber of Deputies took offence, and declared they would repudiate. General Jackson was at that time President of the United States; he very coolly replied, "I give you six months, should you not pay your debt within that time, I

shall not go to war with you, but will seize French property, whenever and wherever I meet with it, to the amount of the sum due." There was no war, no seizure, the sum was paid of course. Now had England been in the position of America, we should have been now at the 176th protocol.

Look at the Portendic affair!

A work has just been published in Paris, by order of the King of the French, entitled "Exploration du Territoire de l'Orégon," by M. Duflot de Mofras, an *attaché* to the legation at Mexico. I wish Lord Aberdeen would cast his eye over this production, which is published under the auspices of Marshal Soult, and the Minister of Foreign Affairs. The whole work is well worth his Lordship's attention, and he will see how the French *attachés* occupy their time. I request his attention to a short extract from page 314 of the first volume, and I beg the reader to bear in mind that this is published by *order of Louis Philippe*. Speaking of England, M. de Mofras thus writes:—

"Personne n'ignore que cette puissance, altière avec ceux qui la craignent, sait faire des concessions lorsqu'elle rencontre des adversaires qui ne se laissent point intimider."

I must confess I felt humiliated as an English-

man when I read that passage, because I knew that the sentiment there recorded would be received as a truism in every capital in Europe.

Why Lord Aberdeen abandoned Colonel Stoddart and Captain Conolly to their wretched fate, I cannot form a conjecture; the reader will have seen that French officers in Africa and Tuscany told me, that these men were politically doomed; now, without venturing to assert that that was the case, I do not hesitate to say, that if the English government were really resolved upon the sacrifice of these brave envoys, they could not well have adopted more certain measures to procure their destruction.

CHAPTER XII.

Lieutenant Wyburd's case — Rustom Beg — Wyburd sent on a secret Mission to Khiva—Colonel Shiel's despatch—Author's letter to Lord Aberdeen on the cruel Abandonment of Wyburd—Lord Aberdeen denies the Mission — Wyburd an Innocent Traveller—Author's Reply—Lord Aberdeen admits Lieutenant Wyburd's Mission — Lieutenant Wyburd overlooked.

CHAPTER XII.

THE CASE OF LIEUTENANT WYBURD OF THE INDIAN NAVY.

THE Indian navy has been remarkable for the number of men of talent, daring, and enterprise, it has produced; but, probably, the most extraordinary man for cool intrepidity, proficiency in the Eastern languages, and the aptitude for adopting Asiatic character and customs, that this distinguished service ever produced, was Lieutenant Wyburd.

He left England in the year 1823, leaving a widowed mother and two sisters, to provide for whom was the stimulus of all his exertions.

He was soon remarked for the qualities I have enumerated above, and in the year 1830, he obtained the rank of lieutenant.

In the year 1833, in consequence of his remarkable proficiency in Persian and other Oriental lan-

guages, he was appointed interpreter to the commodore in the Persian Gulf.

His adventures in Arabia, while employed in the service of government, were of a most romantic description, but my space will only allow me thus to allude to them.

The following passage, however, in Wellstead's "Travels to the City of the Caliphs," exhibits in such a striking manner Lieutenant Wyburd, that I think the reader will thank me for making the extract.

RUSTOM BEG.

"As I was one day strolling along the bazar, I met an individual, whose tattered garments were but partially concealed by a greasy cloth burnoose. His hair and beard were of great length, but matted, dirty, and uncombed; over his shoulder he carried a naked sword; his head was turbaned, and he walked carelessly along in apparent indifference, humming a Persian air. He cast a gleam of surprise on me as I approached, and passed on. 'You are just that kind of person,' thought I, 'that, unless prepared for the encounter, I would sooner meet in the streets of Busrah than in the desert.' The next morning I saw the same figure seated before my door, smoking a greasy pipe. It now flashed across my recollection that I had seen those features before. I advanced towards him, and exchanged the salutation of peace with him. 'Your name?' I inquired. 'Rustom Beg.' I was now convinced—his tones were familiar to me. 'Can it be pos-

sible?' said I, half doubtingly, in English, 'that you are Wyburd.' I had found the 'open sesame' to his heart. He had before continued unmoved in his sitting position; his head half inclined upwards, and looking at me through the corner of his eye in a manner most villanous and knowing, but at the mention of his name all his gravity had fled; in an instant he sprang on his feet. Wyburd had obtained from the government permission to travel, and obtain for them information concerning Arabia. He had been about two years there, and assumed the Persian name of Rustom Beg, was a perfect master of the language, and, in other respects, a complete native. What has become of this extraordinary individual I know not. He afterwards journeyed into Central Asia, and the last I heard of him was, that he was engaged hewing wood and fetching water amidst the Turkomans. Illustrative of his peculiar aptitude in assuming native character, I may mention an anecdote, which was recently related to me by Lieutenant Conolly (well known from his valuable travels, recently published). Wyburd was staying with our Persian ambassador, when, lo! one morning he disappeared, and nobody knew whither he had proceeded. About noon of the same day, a Koord made his appearance at the gate, and demanded instant audience of the ambassador, to which he was at length admitted; he then stated, in the most frantic manner, that he had been met that morning by an Englishman, who had shortly before quitted the ambassador's house; that he had been knocked from his horse, robbed, and otherwise ill-treated, and that never should sleep close his eyelids until he had had the blood of the offender. In vain did the ambassador, by offers of money, try to pacify him; in vain was all the

reasoning of others, till at length, when the ambassador became seriously apprehensive as to the consequences, the individual threw off his turban and his garments, and discovered to them the laughing face of Wyburd.

"It is a singular fact, that a small service like the Indian navy should have, in one and the same year, seven midshipmen, four of whom have traversed more of the East than probably the same number of individuals alive, Ormsby, Lynch, Wyburd, and, may I add, the editor of these volumes.

"We now lived together: our days were passed in the manner I describe; our evenings were usually passed smoking and drinking coffee at the house of some mutual acquaintance. Rustom Beg and I lived in great harmony, and I was fast improving under his tuition, when, lo! one morning I went to his room, and found it untenanted. Furniture there was none at any time, not even the luxury of a carpet; he always slept on the bare floor. I therefore inquired of the janitor of the khan, if he knew aught respecting him? and I learnt, with not much surprise, that he had risen early, saddled his mare, purchased some grain for it, and a few loaves of bread for himself, which he placed in the nosebag of his horse, and had then ridden off, he knew not whither.

"A week elapsed, and still there were no tidings of Rustom Beg, and I had given up all hopes of seeing him for years, when, one morning, while I was seated sipping my coffee in the gateway of the khan, who should ride up but my friend, pale and emaciated. His burnoose and sword had disappeared, and the horse, which before was sleek, fat, and playful, now hung his head droopingly, and was a perfect skeleton. Our greeting was most cordial.

A meal was soon provided; and after he had satisfied the cravings of his appetite, a matter neither hastily nor easily accomplished, he related his adventures.

"'I had,' said he, 'found myself out of sorts that morning, and thought a trip to the desert, to visit a sheikh of my acquaintance, would put me in order. For three days I journeyed without meeting any one. I now found the encampment of my friends, who treated me with their usual hospitality, and I passed a day with him. On the following morning, returning by myself towards the city, I was met by a party belonging to another tribe, who, without any hesitation, fell upon me. I had nothing left but to dash through them. One I cut down; at the same instant, I received a wound in my sword-arm. A passage was now, however, opened to me: but one horseman, as I dashed by, grasped my burnoose. The shock nearly unhorsed me, but I left a portion of it in his hands, and was away, with the whole party in full gallop in the rear. The fleetness of my horse saved me, and here I am.'

"He bared his arm, and shewed me his wound, which was a deep gash; but his strong constitution, aided by his plain diet, enabled him soon to get over it.

"We had passed about a month at Busrah, when I received, by a courier, one morning, intelligence that Colonel Taylor, the British resident, was desirous of seeing me at Bagdat. This at once decided my movements; and, accompanied by Wyburd, we embarked in a small boat, and in seven days found ourselves in the City of the Caliphs."

In the year 1835, it was thought necessary to send to Khiva on a very important secret mission a

person who possessed coolness and courage, united with such a knowledge of Oriental habits, customs, and languages, that he could wear the native garb, without any risk of being discovered as an European.

Sir John Campbell, who, at that period, so ably represented the sovereign of Great Britain at the Court at Persia, looked long in vain for such a "*rara avis*;" for I should say that, besides the qualities enumerated above, discretion and perfect integrity were indispensable.

At this very "nick of time," Lieutenant Wyburd arrives at Tehran on "sick certificate."

The nature and danger of the enterprise are pointed out to him, and he immediately accepts the proffered mission. Lieutenant Wyburd now thought he saw a prospect of providing for the unprotected mother and sisters he had left in England. He forgot the malady under which he was labouring, and starts for Astrabad, in disguise, under the name of Hajee Ahmet Arab, with the intention of exploring the eastern shore of the Caspian Sea in his way to Khiva, and has never been heard of since; and I very much suspect he has not been very anxiously sought after. When I say he has never been heard of since, I think it right to say, that a despatch was received from Colonel

Shiel. As this despatch is a curiosity in its way, I will give it from an official copy now lying before me:—

Extract from a Despatch from Lieut.-Colonel Shiel, dated Erzeroom, August 10, 1840.

"Early in March 1838, Ameer Beg, Gholam, one of the couriers of this mission, was seized not far from Ghonan by a party of Turcomans, and carried into slavery."

"It affords me much satisfaction to inform your Lordship, that Ameer Beg arrived here on the 30th ultimo, having been redeemed from slavery by Captain Abbott."

"I am inclined to believe, from the circumstances stated to Ameer Beg, by the people of Khiva, that the person who was known to have been murdered by a Yamook Turcoman chief a few years before Ameer Beg's capture, and whose dress, hair, &c., were minutely described, and who had found his way to the camp of the Turcoman chief from Astrabad, could be no other than Lieutenant Wyburd of the Indian navy, who, in the summer of 1835, left Tehran (when Sir John Campbell was envoy in Persia) with the view of penetrating to Khiva, and of whom no information has been received by us since he left Astrabad."

So, because a Persian courier heard that a "person had been murdered" a *few years* before this courier visited the country, Lieutenant-Colonel Shiel is "*inclined* to believe," that this person

could be no other than Lieutenant Wyburd of the Indian navy, &c.

This person's hair and dress were, however, described. But Colonel Shiel does not communicate this description: if it were such as to lead one to believe that the person reported to have been murdered was an European, then that person could *not* have been Lieutenant Wyburd; and if the reader has read the account of *Rustom Beg*, which I extracted from Wellstead's book, it will not be necessary to say any thing farther on that point.

Are the names of British officers, employed on important diplomatic missions, to be erased from the official lists on evidence such as this?

I will only call the reader's attention to the fact, that the Colonel Shiel who was "*inclined*" to believe the report of Mr. Wyburd's death on this statement, is the same Colonel Shiel who sent Saleh Mohammed's account of what he said he had heard concerning the death of Stoddart and Conolly.

Colonel Shiel, however, did not say he was "*inclined*" to believe that statement; he merely remarked upon the prepossessing appearance of the narrator. Probably Ameer Beg was a prepossessing Gholam, although Colonel Shiel's despatch is silent on that point. In April last (1844), my

attention was first called to the case of this unfortunate Lieutenant Wyburd, with a request that I would direct Dr. Wolff to make inquiries about him. At this period, although I thought it impossible that a messenger could overtake him, I wrote immediately, authorising him to ransom Lieutenant Wyburd at my cost, should he find him at Bokhara; or should he obtain such information as would render a journey to Khiva advisable, I undertook to provide the necessary funds.

I, at the same time, wrote to Mr. Addington, the Under-Secretary of State, on the subject; and as that gentleman did not condescend to acknowledge the receipt of my letter, after waiting a fortnight, I addressed the following letter to the Earl of Aberdeen:—

(*Copy.*)

"*Captain Grover to the Earl of Aberdeen.*

"*Army and Navy Club,*
"*May* 2, 1844.

"My Lord,

"I consider it my duty to direct your Lordship's attention to the case of Lieutenant Wyburd. This unfortunate man was sent on a secret mission to Khiva in the year 1835; and, if my information be correct, he has never since been heard of in any trustworthy manner.

"Lieutenant Wyburd's case was communicated to me

on the 15th ultimo, with a request that I would direct Dr. Wolff to make inquiries on the subject. I immediately wrote to Dr. Wolff, without, however, entertaining much hope that my letter could arrive in time to be of any use: still, when the liberty of a British subject was concerned, I thought no chance ought to be thrown away, and at the same time I communicated the circumstance to Mr. Addington.

"It is much to be regretted that Lieutenant Wyburd's case was not made known to Dr. Wolff, as, from the cordial manner he has been received at Tehran by the ambassador from the King of Khiva, he would, probably, have ascertained the fate of this wretched man.

"I make no apology for troubling your Lordship; for, should the notion get abroad that British officers are to be sent on perilous duties, to be then abandoned, the honour of the British army, and the prosperity of the British nation, will soon be among the things past.

"I have to request your Lordship will have the goodness to direct that the receipt of this letter be acknowledged.

"I have the honour to be, my Lord,
"Your Lordship's obedient Servant,
"JOHN GROVER.

"*To the Right Hon.*
"*The Earl of Aberdeen,*
"*&c. &c.*
"*Secretary of State.*"

Before sending the foregoing letter I submitted it to the committee of the "Stoddart and Conolly Fund." A gentleman, on hearing the letter read,

observed that it would be advisable to inform Lord Aberdeen upon what authority I made the assertion that Lieutenant Wyburd had been sent on a secret mission to Khiva in the year 1835, and had not been heard of since.

I replied that the reason I did not give my authority was this: "That I had seen so much of the unfair conduct of the Foreign Office, that, as they never would suspect the source of my information, and as the readiest way of getting out of the difficulty would be to deny Lieutenant Wyburd's mission altogether, and call him an '*innocent traveller*,' I felt satisfied that they would not hesitate a moment in thus disclaiming their envoy. At all events, it would be an opportunity of testing their honesty, and I sincerely hoped that I should have to place on the records of the Committee that I had injured in thought the ruling powers at the Foreign Office."

Before the second sun had set I received—"Oh! my prophetic soul! my uncle!"—the following curious letter:—

"*Mr. Addington to Captain Grover.*

"*Foreign Office,*
"*May* 4, 1844.

"Sir,

"I am directed by the Earl of Aberdeen to acknow-

ledge the receipt of your letter of the 2d of May, respecting Lieutenant Wyburd of the Indian navy.

"With respect to the statements in your letter that Lieutenant Wyburd was sent on a secret mission to Khiva in the year 1835, I am to inform you that this office is not aware that Lieutenant Wyburd was sent on any mission at all to Khiva. He is stated to have left Tehran, under the name of Hajee Ahmet Arab, in the summer of 1835 for Astrabad, with the view of penetrating into Khiva; and nothing having been heard of him in the year 1838, notwithstanding Sir John M'Neill's endeavours to trace him, Lieutenant-Colonel Stoddart was instructed, on proceeding to Bokhara in that year, to endeavour to ascertain his fate, and if he should be in bondage in Khiva, to take such steps as might be possible to obtain his liberation by ransom or otherwise.

"In the year 1840 one of the couriers of the British mission who had been detained in slavery in Khiva, and whose release was then effected by Captain Abbott, gave such information to Lieutenant-Colonel Shiel, on his return to Tehran, of statements made to him by the people of Khiva, as induced Lieutenant-Colonel Shiel to believe that a person who was known to have been murdered a few years before the capture of the courier by a Yamook Turcoman chief, to whose camp he had found his way from Astrabad, and whose dress, hair, &c. were minutely described, could be no other than Lieutenant Wyburd.

"I am, Sir,

"Your most obedient, humble Servant,

"H. U. ADDINGTON.

"*To Captain Grover,*

"*Army and Navy Club.*"

Fancy my astonishment at receiving the foregoing letter, when I knew that the importance of Wyburd's mission was well known, not only at the Foreign Office, but at the India House, and to the Indian government.

I allowed a night to pass for my indignation to cool down a little, and I then wrote the following letter:—

"*Captain Grover to Lord Aberdeen.*

"*Army and Navy Club,*
"*May 7th,* 1845.

"My Lord,

"I received yesterday a letter written by Mr. Addington, by your Lordship's direction, dated the 4th instant, in reply to my letter of the 2d.

"It is, indeed, with surprise that I read that the Foreign Office 'is not aware that Lieutenant Wyburd was sent on a secret mission to Khiva in the year 1835,' or 'on any mission at all to Khiva,' but that he left Tehran, in the summer of 1835, under the name of Hajee Ahmet Arab.

"Now, my Lord, I should never have presumed to address your Lordship, had I not the best evidence of the facts to which I considered it my duty to direct your Lordship's attention. This evidence is a letter, desiring me to call Dr. Wolff's attention to the case of this unfortunate man, and it concludes thus (referring to Lieutenant Wyburd), 'whom I despatched on a secret mission to Khiva in June 1835, and who has never since been heard of in any trustworthy manner.'

"This letter, my Lord, is from Sir John Campbell,

and I presume your Lordship will admit this as conclusive evidence of the 'secret mission.'

"From Mr. Addington's letter it appears that a courier repeated some reports he had heard about a man having been murdered 'a few years before' his (the courier's) capture, whose hair and dress were minutely described, and that Colonel Shiel imagined that this was Lieutenant Wyburd.

"Now, my Lord, all this is so extremely vague, that I have no hesitation in saying that Sir John Campbell is fully justified in stating that 'Lieutenant Wyburd has never been heard of in any trustworthy manner.'

"Having directed your Lordship's attention to this affair with a full confidence that something will be done, I have only to request that your Lordship will have the goodness to direct that the receipt of this letter be acknowledged.

"I have the honour to be,
"My Lord,
"Your Lordship's obedient, humble Servant,
"JOHN GROVER.

"*The Right Hon.*
"*The Earl of Aberdeen,*
"*&c. &c. &c.*
"*Secretary of State.*"

It will be seen by the following letter that the Foreign Office acknowledged their "*error*."

"*Mr. Addington to Captain Grover.*
"*Foreign Office,*
"*May 9th*, 1844.

"Sir,

"In acknowledging the receipt of your further letter

of the 7th instant respecting Lieutenant Wyburd, I am directed by the Earl of Aberdeen to take the opportunity to correct an error in my letter to you of the 4th instant, in which it is stated that 'this office is not aware that Lieutenant Wyburd was sent on any mission at all to Khiva.' The mistake originated in the circumstance that at the time when Lieutenant Wyburd was stated to have been sent, namely, in June 1835, the British mission at the court of Persia was under the direction of the East India Company, and not of the Foreign Office. It remained under the direction of the East India Company until November of that year, at which time Sir John Campbell, the envoy from the Governor-General, was relieved by Mr. Ellis as ambassador from the Crown.

"In consequence of the statement in your letter of the 7th instant, that Sir John Campbell had informed you that he had himself despatched Lieutenant Wyburd on a secret mission to Khiva in June 1835, reference has been made to the correspondence between this office and the Board of Control in that year, with the view of ascertaining whether any communication had been made by the latter department to this office on the subject of Lieutenant Wyburd's mission; and it appears that a copy of Sir John Campbell's despatch to the Court of Directors, reporting his having despatched Lieutenant Wyburd, was communicated to the Foreign Office in September, 1835. This circumstance had been overlooked when my letter of the 4th instant was addressed to you.'

"I am, Sir,

"Your most obedient, humble Servant,

"H. U. ADDINGTON.

"*Captain Grover*,

"*Army and Navy Club*."

So that, according to this letter, Lord Aberdeen confesses that Lieutenant Wyburd was sent on a secret mission to Khiva, and that the fact was *forgotten*. Can such things be? Had I not the official correspondence now before me I should think I was mistaken.

The reader will observe, that my prediction was fulfilled, that Lord Aberdeen directed that the unfortunate Lieutenant Wyburd's mission should be denied, exactly in the terms my "prophetic soul" told me it would be done. When, however, I send his Lordship an official extract from a letter written by the minister who despatched Lieutenant Wyburd, Lord Aberdeen begs leave to correct an "*error*" in his letter of the 4th May, 1844; and then gives the following explanation, which is ingenious, and, perhaps in Downing Street may be thought clever.

His Lordship thus accounts for the mistake:—

"The mistake originated in the circumstance, that at the time when Lieutenant Wyburd was stated to have been sent, namely, in June 1835, the British Mission at the court of Persia was under the direction of the East India Company until November of that year; at which time Sir John Campbell, the envoy from the Governor-General, was relieved by Mr. Ellis as ambassador from the Crown."

For some time past, I am ashamed and sorry to

say, that when I have read a statement from Lord Aberdeen's office, the first question I have asked myself is, "Is this statement true?"

The Court of Directors of the East India Com- say, that the above statement is not; and they refuse to grant a pension to Lieutenant Wyburd's aged and unfortunate mother, because Lieutenant Wyburd, although an officer in their service, was sent on this mission, not by the Company, but by Queen Victoria's government.

Both these statements, it is very evident, cannot be true, there is an "error" somewhere. I have never had reason to doubt any sentence that has come from the Secretary's office at the India House; and as a proprietor of India Stock, I give public notice to the Chairman of our Honourable Court, that I intend bringing this subject forward at the next meeting of the proprietors; and I think it right to say, that I do not for a moment doubt that it will be seen, that the "error" does not lie with the East India Company.

CHAPTER XIII.

Have Colonel Stoddart and Captain Conolly been put to Death?

CHAPTER XIII.

The reader, who has read the extracts from Dr. Wolff's letters that I have published from time time in the newspapers, will probably be surprised at the heading of this chapter, as he will most likely have adopted Dr. Wolff's opinion, which I have so often communicated to the public, that Colonel Stoddart and Captain Conolly were murdered at Bokhara.

Since Dr. Wolff's departure from Constantinople, I have communicated the intelligence I have received from him, whether favourable or otherwise, as soon as I have received it, without comment, except on one occasion. When Dr. Wolff announced, simply, that Lieutenant Wyburd, of the Indian navy, had been murdered at Bokhara, I added in a note, "It remains yet to be seen on what evidence this assertion is founded."

I inserted this note, because, as I had never had any communication with Lieutenant Wyburd's

family, and as they were not aware of the efforts I had made to restore their relative, I thought they might be shocked at seeing his death so abruptly announced.

I had the gratification to find, that Lieutenant Wyburd's family, so far from disapproving of the attempts that were made to restore their relative, immediately wrote to me expressing their gratitude in the most affecting manner.

I will now consider the evidence upon which Dr. Wolff founds his belief of the murder of Colonel Stoddart and Captain Conolly.

The first account of the execution of the envoys Dr. Wolff received was from Hajee Ibraheem, whom the Doctor calls "the worthy brother of that scoundrel," Abd-ool-Samet Khan; and I will extract from the Doctor's journal this man's version of the history of the execution.

"*Hajee Ibraheem.* 'Yousuf Wolff Sahib, have you a letter from the government of England for the Ameer of Bokhara?'

"*Myself.* 'No; but I have letters for his Majesty from the Sultan, Mohammed Shah, and the Russian ambassador at Tehran.'

"*Hajee Ibraheem.* 'All these letters are good for nothing. You will be brought with your eyes bound, and put in prison, for the reason that the

Ameer suspected Colonel Stoddart and Captain Conolly was, that they had no letters from the Queen; and the letters which did arrive were treated with contempt. *A letter arrived from the Governor-General of India, in which he (the Governor-General) gave the Ameer an account of his proceedings in Affghanistan; and described both Colonel Stoddart and Captain Conolly as harmless travellers, &c.*, at which the Ameer was angry, and put them to death.'

"Now, bear in mind, that *Hajee Ibraheem was fully acquainted not only with the arrival of a letter from the Governor-General of India, but also with the contents of that letter; and, moreover, Hajee Ibraheem told me expressly, that his brother the Nayeb, Abd-ool-Samet Khan, was the source from which he received all this information.*"

When I read the above passage, I thought the question was decidedly set at rest. The reader will recollect, that when the copy of Lord Ellenborough's celebrated letter was shewn to me at the Foreign Office, by Mr. Hammond, on the 23d June, 1843, as a proof that the British government had not totally abandoned their envoys, I told Mr. Hammond, that if this letter should have reached its destination, then, indeed, the fate of my friend would be settled.

When Dr. Wolff saw the Nayeb, Abd-ool-Samet Khan, from whom Hajee Ibraheem said he had received the foregoing account, he gave Dr. Wolff a different version,—the one upon which was founded Dr. Wolff's letter, headed "official," (see page 103). The Nayeb told Dr. Wolff, that the envoys were executed in the presence of a mahram (chamberlain). The following is the Nayeb's version :—

"Both Colonel Stoddart and Captain Conolly have been put to death, without a sin or a crime on their part. When Colonel Stoddart came to me, he had not a shirt on his back, and was as pale as the wall. I offered the King one hundred thousand tillahs for their release ; but he would not give ear to my proposal : all his Majesty replied was :— '*They are spies, and as spies, they must die.*'

"Soon after them, another Englishman came, whose name I do not know, he was also put to death ; and one Frankee, Naselli, by name, who had letters for Avitable, at Lahore. *Three days after they were killed,* the tyrant sent to me Mahram Saadat, and gave to me the full report of it ; and I went to see the spot."

So that it appears that if our envoys were executed, the deed must have been perpetrated in a very secret manner, as the king's lieutenant was only acquainted with the fact three days after it

was said to have taken place; and then, in consequence of a special communication from the king. It does not appear from Dr. Wolff's letters that he saw any one who said he witnessed the execution; so that the account of the *public* execution, for which Saleh Mahommed received 3000 rupees, and on the faith of which, the name of as brave a man as ever wore the British uniform was struck out of the list of the army, must have been false.

The strongest point in favour of a belief of the execution, I must candidly admit, is the arrival of Lord Ellenborough's never-to-be-forgotten and never-to-be-forgiven letter. That it did arrive at its destination there can be no doubt,—Dr. Wolff saw that letter at Bokhara.

I do not mean to accuse Saleh Mahommed of telling a wilful untruth, he informed Dr. Wolff at Meshed, that his story might not be true, and that it might have referred to two other men. Now, the reader will have seen by Colonel's Shiel's official despatch communicated to parliament by Sir Robert Peel, that Jacoob, who had been imprisoned in the well with Colonel Stoddart, and who remained in Bokhara twelve months after the time of the alleged execution, did not hear of it, and he says no such execution could have taken place without his hearing of it. He adds, however, that Yousouf and a

Greek were publicly executed, and it appears that this execution took place at the time assigned for Colonel Stoddart's murder; so that Saleh Mohammed may only have committed an "error."

On Dr. Wolff's arrival at Bokhara, he is taken before the King, who looks at him, but says nothing. He is then taken before the Shakhawl (Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs), and the following dialogue takes place, which is taken down by Moolah Hajee, his private secretary:—

"*Shakhawl.* What is your name and request?'

"*Myself.* Joseph Wolff is my name, a moollah and dervish from England, who was in the city of Bokhara twelve years ago" (Moollah Hajee recollected this, and said so), "when I was well treated by his majesty, and a passport was given to me previous to my departure, which stated that the high order had been issued that Joseph Wolff be allowed to return to his country, and that on the road no one should lay any hindrance in his way. After me, Sir Alexander Burnes arrived, was well treated, and allowed to proceed on his way to England; and the hospitable conduct of his majesty towards myself and Sir Alexander Burnes induced others to visit Bokhara. Both the officers highly beloved and honoured by the British government, my friends, Colonel Stoddart and Captain Conolly, came

here. Captain Conolly was my murreed (spiritual disciple), when suddenly it was reported from the land of Russia, the land of Khiva, &c., that both these officers, brave in war, and possessing religion, had been killed by order of the King of Bokhara; and this news made not only a great sensation throughout England and Hindostan, but also in America; and Mahomed Ali of Egypt heard of it; and thousands in England exclaimed, 'War with Bokhara!' (Here I was interrupted by the Shakhawl, who asked me, 'How far is England from Bokhara?' I replied that England was only three months from Bokhara; but that we had troops at Shikarpore, near Candahar, which is only thirty days distant.) I then continued saying, 'I, Joseph Wolff, seeing this great commotion throughout the world about the reported death of Colonel Stoddart and Captain Conolly, I printed in the newspapers: 'Oh, my English friends, I cannot believe the report of the death of Colonel Stoddart and Captain Conolly, for at Bokhara they revere *guests* very much. I will, therefore, go and ascertain the truth!' My friends said, 'Don't go, for they will kill you also.' I replied, 'Go I will, for Captain Conolly was my great friend.' On seeing my determination, my friends induced the Government of England to order their ambassadors at Constantinople and

Tehran to procure me letters to his majesty the King of Bokhara, from the Sultan, and from Mahomed Shah. On my arrival at Constantinople, the Sultan gave me the required letters, also the Sheikh ul Islam of Stamboul, and Mahomed Shah, not only gave me letters for the King of Bokhara, but also for the Asoof-ood-Dowlah, ordering him to give me every assistance and aid in order that I might obtain a good reception at Bokhara.'

"*Shakhawl.* 'What is, therefore, now your object?'

"*Myself.* 'My object is to ask, *Where are my friends, Colonel Stoddart and Captain Conolly? Are they alive or dead?* If alive, I beg his majesty to send them with me back to England; if dead, I beg his majesty to state the cause.'

"*Shakhawl.* '*Has the British government itself authorised you to come here?*'

"*Myself.* 'No, I am sent by the Sultan and Mahomed Shah on account of their friendship with England.'

"*Shakhawl.* '*Are you authorised to claim them if alive?*'

"*Myself.* 'Yes, by all the powers of Europe, and the voice of the British nation.'

"*Shakhawl.* 'Is there much commotion about it in England?'

"*Myself.* 'Very much.'

"We were then dismissed."

Now, is it likely, if Colonel Stoddart and Captain Conolly had been put to death, that the Secretary of State would have asked Dr. Wolff if he were authorised to claim our envoys if alive? This, and all the accounts I have found in Dr. Wolff's letters, tend to confirm in my mind the account I received at St. Petersburg, that our envoys were both alive at Samarcand.

I make as few extracts as possible from the mass of interesting letters I have received from Dr. Wolff, as I know he will as speedily as possible gratify public curiosity. I must, however, mention one circumstance. Dr. Wolff writes:—

"The time of evening approached, and the military band played '*God save the Queen,*' which most agreeably surprised me."

Dr. Wolff makes no observation whatever upon this very extraordinary circumstance.

At Bokhara they have not the least idea of music, according to our acceptation of that term, and Dr. Wolff says there was not a man at Bokhara who knew any thing of England, or the English language, except the Nayeb's "Halt-front" and "No force." What, then, means this "God save

the Queen" played passing the doctor's residence, or, I should say, prison?

I will give the reader my opinion, upon which he will place his own value.

During the Cabul disaster numerous British soldiers and Sepoys were taken prisoners, and I have good reason to believe were sold at Bokhara. One of the chief objects of Dr. Wolff's mission was to purchase the release of these unfortunates, and he had authority to draw upon my small fortune for that purpose. Among these prisoners would probably be found some musicians, and the king would most likely form these men into a band. The King of Bokhara would, of course, be most anxious to conceal from Dr. Wolff the presence of these men at Bokhara, while they would be most anxious to make themselves known, and the safest and most natural means of doing this would be to play our national air. Such modes of communication have been commonly employed from the time of Richard Cœur de Lion ("Richard, O mon Roi!"), down to Silvio Pellico. Had I, at Bokhara, heard a man humming "Au clair de la lune," I should immediately have been sure that a Frenchman was near, and should have whistled "Dormez, dormez," to shew that I was "wide awake."

Dr. Wolff has certainly adopted the idea that the objects of his anxious search have been murdered, but the evidence he gives does not lead the committee to the same conclusion.

Many of the accounts we received of a European officer, high in the king's favour, and who was teaching the troops the military exercise, I am quite sure did not refer to Colonel Stoddart, but to the Naib, who was desirous probably of passing for a Frankee, therefore I have omitted all notice of these statements.

The reader will have seen, at page 82, the interesting account so kindly sent by Sir Stratford Canning, her Majesty's ambassador at Constantinople: here there can be no question of identity, as one of the men distinctly wrote Colonel Stoddart's name in Persian. This removes all doubt of Stoddart's existence in the summer of 1843. It is also stated in this account, that Colonel Stoddart was preparing to return to England. On Dr. Wolff's arrival at Meshed, he found, in the possession of Colonel Stoddart's agent, considerable property; and I have this moment received from Dr. Wolff a letter, written in the Lazaretto at Trebizonde in February last, in which he asks, "Did Miss Stoddart ever receive the shawls which her poor brother sent to Muhammed Ali at Meshed? They

would certainly have been lost if I had not discovered them by chance. I immediately informed Colonel Shiel of it, who sent an express messenger for them to Meshed, and he told me that he had forwarded them to Miss Stoddart."

In the possession of this Muhammed Ali, Dr. Wolff found intercepted letters, with the seals broken; one of which, addressed by Sir Moses Montefiore to the Jews of Bokhara, was returned to me, and, at the request of Sir Moses Montefiore, I sent it to its original destination.

In Dr. Wolff's last letter to me, received since the former part of this work has been printed, he expresses his regret that the ambassador sent by the King of Bokhara to explain certain circumstances concerning Colonel Stoddart and Captain Conolly was not allowed to proceed to England, for the following reasons:—

"1. Merchants from Chicarpore, in Scinde, of whom there are many at Bokhara, expressed to me their wish, that the ambassador should be received in England; for the king promised, in that case, that no merchant, a subject of England, should pay any duty at the Custom-House.

"2. I should have liked that people from these countries should get an idea of England.

"3. The King of Bokhara promised to dismiss from his service Abd-ool-Samet Khan, if he could obtain English military instructors. This he told me through his ambassador, Nafas Oollah Khan. However, government knows best."

I cannot bring this hurried work to a conclusion without expressing a hope to witness a reform in the Foreign Office. I am no "Reformer," in the ordinary acceptation of that term, but a Conservative. To preserve, however, the advantages of our glorious constitution, and advantageous commercial position, we must not stand still—we must improve, or we shall be left behind.

Now, the improvement that is required at the Foreign Office will not be achieved by removing Lord Aberdeen and appointing Lord Anybody-else.

It is the system that wants improvement, and I should begin by sending to the right-about all those spinners of sentences and special pleaders—I mean the clerks; and I would replace them by men of plain good sense and industry. I would send them a few clerks from the War-Office and Military Secretary's Office, to teach them to express a plain truth in plain language—to condense into half a page what these spinners waste six pages

of good paper in their endeavours to render obscure.

I will not, however, fatigue the reader with my wishes for further improvement at present, as I suspect it will be some time before the hint I have given above will be adopted; and I will only say, that the nation that first adopts truth and candour in its diplomatic relations will obtain an influence that will be irresistible, and all trouble of the correction of "errors" will be avoided.

I will now say good-bye to the reader, and should the present publication induce the government to "call the roll" of the "innocent travellers" that may be serving their country on diplomatic missions in different quarters of the world, with a view of ascertaining if they are in want of assistance, and with a determination to render every assistance, and never to abandon the unfortunates so sent, then, indeed, shall I be well paid for my exertions on behalf of my dear friend, Colonel Stoddart, and his wretched companion, Captain Conolly.

APPENDIX.

APPENDIX, No. I.

NARRATIVE OF SAALEH MAHOMED, COMMONLY CALLED AKHOONDZADEH.

I AM the son of Cazee Mahomed Hassan, of Herat, one of the principal persons of that city: we are the family whose lives Major Todd bought for 10,000 tomans from Yar Mahomed, when the former quitted Herat.

When the Russians were advancing towards Khiva, Major Todd sent my father on a mission to that city. Afterwards Captain Abbott went to Khiva, and I met him at Meroe, where I was purchasing grain. He sent me to Herat, and Major Todd ordered me to proceed and join that officer at Khiva with 1000 tomans. When I reached Khiva, I learned that Mr. Abbott had gone towards Astrakhan, and, moreover, that he had been killed among the Kuzzaks. I still thought it my duty to follow his steps, which I did for twenty-two marches; the last four days and nights I was perfectly alone in the desert, and found him wounded and a prisoner in a Kuzzak tent, where I delivered to him 980 ducats.

I then returned to Khiva, and the day after my

arrival, Mr. Shakespeare and my father entered the city; Mr. Shakespeare despatched me to Herat.

Four months afterwards, Major Todd directed me to join Captain Conolly, then on the road to Meroe, proceeding to Khiva and Koghan, and deliver to him 2000 ducats. We resided seven months in Khiva: Captain Conolly then sent me to Cabul to Sir William M'Naghten with important despatches and messages. Shortly after my arrival in Cabul, Sir William M'Naghten told me it was necessary that I should return to Khiva, to inform Captain Conolly that he was to remain in Khiva and not proceed to Koghan, on account of the expected attack of Persia on Khiva. When I reached Meroe, fourteen or fifteen months ago, I found that Captain Conolly had left Khiva and gone to Koghan. I became grievously ill, and the Khan of Khiva ordered me to be conveyed in a camel-litter to Khiva, where I delivered my letters and presents, and remained upwards of two months waiting for orders from Captain Conolly, who the Khan told me had given him a promise to return to Khiva. Captain Conolly then obtained leave from the Ameer for me to join him in Bokhara, which the Khan permitted me to do, and gave me presents, saying, at the same time, that Captain Conolly had committed a great error by going to Bokhara, where he would be treated like Colonel Stoddart. The Khan had a great regard for Captain Conolly, and expressed great regret at his having left Khiva. I do not know the cause of Captain Conolly's quitting that city; but I suspect it was owing to an intrigue of the Moktor or Visier. When I reached the Bokhara frontier, the commander told me that two days before my arrival (about the middle of December, 1841), the Ameer had

seized and confined Conolly Stoddart and Captain Conolly, and that I could not proceed without further orders. He placed a guard over me. Five days afterwards orders arrived that I should be sent to Bokhara. We reached the city in two days about sunrise; an hour afterwards I was carried before the Ameer. I saluted him with "Allah-ho-akbar;" he looked at me for about a minute, but said nothing, and on his making a signal with his head I was carried off. They put me in confinement in a comfortable place, and treated me well. I was under the charge of the Topchi Bashi; so too were Colonel Stoddart and Captain Conolly, and Allahdad Khan, Schah Soojah's envoy, who were in confinement in his harem, and were then well treated. My servants, seven in number, and the servants of Captain Conolly, thirty-three in number, were imprisoned in the Seah Chah, or black well.

The black well is the prison for criminals. It is a circular well, seventeen feet deep, and twenty-one feet in diameter; it has a brick roof with a hole in it, and criminals are lowered down by a rope.

I used to communicate secretly with the gentlemen. I was very ill, and the Ameer sent me a doctor. After twenty days, he sent two painters, and ordered me to make a plan of Herat. A week afterwards the Ameer sent for me at night. He was seated on the ground in a small room, with two servants in attendance. He forced me to sit down, as I was ill. He asked how I, the son of a Cazee, could serve the English? He then spoke of the events in Cabul, and of the insurrection there. It was the disasters in Cabul, which induced the Ameer to confine the two officers. Thirty days or so, subsequently, about the beginning of Moharem (middle of February), two men

came into my room, and stripped me of all my good clothes, and shoved me out of the room; and, at the same time, Allahdad Khan appeared under charge of two other men. The Ameer was looking out of a window. They took us to the top of a hill, outside the citadel, but within the city, and called for a rope. I thought they were going to kill us, but this was the black well; and I was greatly rejoiced to find that the rope was only wanted to lower us down, which was done. We found there Yoosoof, Captain Conolly's Greek, and six others of his servants. The other people, being Captain Conolly's servants, Allahdad Khan's, and mine, amounting to about fifty-five persons, who had hitherto been confined in the well, with about twenty-five or thirty criminals, in all eighty persons, had been previously removed from the well, where they were packed one on the top of the other. The necessary was in the same place, and it was removed every fifteen days. The floor was, beyond measure, damp. I had no clothes, except a cotton shirt and trousers, though it was deep winter, and I was very ill from fever and ague; but one of Captain Conolly's servants gave me a cloth coat, which saved my life. Our food was a small piece of bread in the morning, and the same at night.

Up to this time, the two gentlemen remained in the same place of confinement in the harem of the Topchi Bashi.

We remained for two months without any change, and without any communication with Colonel Stoddart and Captain Conolly. The Ameer then went to Koghan in the beginning of Rebbee-ool-Eovel (the middle of April), having first liberated Captain Conolly's servants who

were in the well. Thus Allahdad Khan, I, and Yoosoof, were the only persons living there, besides the criminals; but our food was increased abundantly by an allowance given by Captain Conolly, and permitted by the Ameer.

The Ameer returned in less than two months, about the end of Rabbee-ool-Akhir (the last day of this month was the 10th of June). Three days afterwards we three were hauled out of the well, and Allahdad Khan and I were chained together by the neck. Allahdad Khan told me to say the Killemeh, for that they were going to put us to death. Yoosoof was chained with a Hindoo, a highwayman, and a man who had killed his father. They took us, in this way, through the bazaars to the citadel, and made us halt at a place where the Ameer looked at us. They took the chains from Allahdad Khan's neck and mine, and led Yoosoof and the other three prisoners out of the citadel, and killed them. I saw their bodies half an hour afterwards. The Hindoo was killed first, and then Yoosoof, who told the executioner to sharpen his knife that he might not suffer pain. He then raised his hands and eyes towards heaven, and his throat was cut. This one of the spectators told me. This happened on Friday, the 30 of Rebbee-ool-Akhir (the 10th of June). Yoosoof, while in the well, had become a Mussulman, to escape the ill-treatment of the criminals, who would give him nothing to eat. He was not circumcised, but he said the Killemeh.

Allahdad Khan and I were told we were at liberty to go where we pleased.

I went to live with the Ameer's Visier's father, who was a merchant, and a good man, who pitied my condition. He gave me lodging, food, and clothing, and a

Candahar merchant of my acquaintance gave me fifteen ducats. My five horses, and two hired camels, and all my property, consisting of cashmere shawls, gold-hilted sword, and gold-hilted dagger, and about two hundred tomans in ready money, amounting in all to about one thousand ducats, were seized and confiscated by the Ameer, besides about four hundred and fifty ducats value of government presents, which I was conveying to Captain Conolly.

The next morning, a secret message came from Captain Conolly, saying, he had heard that I and Allahdad Khan had been killed, and that he was full of anxiety. The same day another message came, ordering me to remain in Bokhara, that an English gentleman (Mr. Thomson) had gone to Khiva, and that he (Captain Conolly) had contrived to send Hoossein Leng, the Heratee, to Khiva. When I afterwards went to Khiva, I found that Hoossein had actually gone to Khiva, but had arrived after the departure of Mr. Thomson.

On Sunday, or Monday, the Ameer sent to Colonel Stoddart and Captain Conolly certain letters from Cabul, which had got into the Ameer's possession seven or nine months before, the contents of which the Ameer desired to know. This I heard from Syed Hoossein, the brother of the Topchi Bashi, who had charge of the two officers. The Ameer sent, at the same time, a message that he would free them in a few days, and told them to be of good heart. On Tuesday, at night, their quarters were entered by several men, who stripped them, and carried them off to prison; but I do not know whether it was to the black well or some other. In stripping Colonel Stoddart a lead pencil was found in the

lining of his coat, and some papers in his waist. These were taken to the Ameer, who gave orders that Colonel Stoddart should be beaten with heavy sticks until he disclosed who brought the papers, and to whom he wrote. He was most violently beaten, but he revealed nothing; he was beaten repeatedly for two or three days. On Friday, the 8th or 9th (the 7th of Jemmadee-ool-Eovel, 17th of June), the Ameer gave orders that Colonel Stoddart should be killed in the presence of Captain Conolly, who was to be offered life if he would become a Mahomedan. In the afternoon they were taken outside the prison into the street, which is a kind of small square. Their hands were tied across in front. Many people assembled to behold the spectacle. Their graves were dug before their eyes. Colonel Stoddart exclaimed aloud at the cruelty and tyranny of the Ameer. His head was then cut off with a knife.

The chief executioner then turned to Captain Conolly, and said, "The Ameer spares your life if you will become a Mussulman." Captain Conolly answered, "Colonel Stoddart has been a Mussulman for three years, and you have killed him,—you killed Yoosoof too; I will not be a Mussulman; and I am ready to die." Saying which, he stretched forth his neck. His head was then cut off.

Their bodies were interred in the graves which had been dug; and I myself have seen the spot, and the small hillocks which mark the place.

One of the executioners gave me the foregoing relation; and, moreover, he offered to bring me the heads if I chose, that I might take them with me, but I refused this offer.

I remained ten days in Bokhara after the death of the

two gentlemen, with the good Oozbell merchant, named Eeeshan-i-kazee; he had given the thirty-three servants of Captain Conolly and my servants food and clothes.

The cause, as I said before, of the Ameer's treatment of the two officers was the events in Cabul. In addition to this, the day I was liberated from the black well, a letter arrived from Cabul to the Ameer, sealed by Akhbar Khan, the brother of Allahdad Khan, the chiefs and moollahs of Cabul, stating that they had slain the greater part of the English, and that as he had feared to kill the two Englishmen who were his prisoners, he had better give them to the writers of the letter; but that Allahdad Khan was guiltless, as he had gone to Bokhara by the orders of Schah Soojah. This letter made a deep impression upon the Ameer. The object of it was to procure the liberation of Allahdad, and it was he who told me that such a letter had arrived.

I thought it the best plan to leave Bokhara perfectly quiet. I, therefore, set out on foot, with one servant who had remained in Bokhara. On the fourth day I reached the river, but the commander would not let me cross without orders from Bokhara, as I had no pass. This caused a detention of fifteen days, until the pass arrived, but I was well treated.

The day of my arrival, a Mr, Marcelli, proceeding to Bokhara, arrived. He said his father was a Mussulman, and that he wished to be a Mussulman and enter the Ameer's service. He went on to Bokhara under restraint, and I heard by the return messenger who brought my pass, that he had been put into the black well, to remain there until it was ascertained what he really was.

I then hired a camel and went with a caravan in eight

days to Meroe, where I borrowed thirty ducats from the Jews who were my acquaintances, and went on to Khiva. On my return, with the money the Khan gave me, I repaid the debt.

I went to Khiva, because I thought it might, perchance, be useful, there having been an arrangement to return to Khiva with Captain Conolly. I was seven days on the journey, and travelled by the desert road. We had no guide, and, being unable to find the wells, were near perishing from thirst, which would certainly have happened had not some travellers come to our assistance. I remained fifteen days in Khiva, and was treated with great kindness by the Khan. At my departure he gave me one hundred and twenty tomans, and two coats of cloth, and a shawl. I then returned in fourteen days to Meroe, where I halted twenty days waiting for a caravan, and then I proceeded to Meshed. I spent some of the money given me by the Khan of Khiva in purchasing necessaries, and I borrowed eighty tomans, to be repaid by ninety tomans.

Tehran, November 23, 1842.

Besides the internal evidence of truth contained in the foregoing narrative, I wish to add, that the appearances and manners of the Akhoondzadeh, who is a most intelligent and prepossessing young man, contribute highly in strengthening the impression in favour of his veracity.

JUSTIN SHIEL.

COL. STODDART AND CAPT. CONOLLY.

To the Editor of the Morning Herald.

SIR,

The "Herald" of this day contains at length the narrative of the Persian Saaleh Mahomed, and as this is headed, "The Murder of Colonel Stoddart and Captain Conolly," many of your readers may not take the trouble of reading this very long statement, and may imagine that these excellent officers have really been murdered; I trust you will therefore have the kindness to admit the following remarks in your widely circulated journal.

If your readers will take the trouble of comparing this "Narrative" with my account of it from memory, which you had the kindness to extract from my "Appeal" in behalf of these unfortunate gentlemen, and which they will find in the "Morning Herald" of Friday last, they will perceive that they agree in all important particulars, and that in the pretended account of the execution, I have almost given the very words.

This Persian merely relates what *another told him*, and any of your intelligent readers who may take the trouble of reading his "narrative," will readily perceive the glaring improbabilities.

This man according to his own account, was sent by Major Todd to join Captain Conolly. He says the execution took place in a "square outside the prison," and "that many people assembled to behold the spectacle." His narrative is very circumstantial, but he concludes by

saying, "one of the executioners gave me the foregoing relation." In fact, this Persian knows nothing at all about the matter, and although at liberty, did not take the trouble of attending the "spectacle."

Now had this been the only account received, although I would not admit it as evidence, when the *lives of two men were at stake*, still I would say it possibly might be true: but at the Foreign Office they had *other accounts*, some which were shewn to me as *confirmatory*, but which were in fact *contradictory;* they stated that *rumours* were circulated in the city of Bokhara of the death of these officers, but as the execution was *private*, no particulars could be sent; now, at the Foreign Office, they have accounts, brought by the last June overland mail, which are certified as worthy of credit, and which state that *Stoddart and Conolly are still alive.*

I am thankful to the Government for having published this statement, and I trust Lord Aberdeen will have the goodness to order the publication of the other statements, and then the public will be enabled to judge whether Dr. Wolff ought to be assisted in his kind offer of proceeding to Bokhara to clear up this point, and to attempt the release of these gentlemen if still alive.

Thanking you most kindly for the interest you have taken in the fate of my poor friend, I have the honour to be, Mr. Editor, your obedient servant,

JOHN GROVER,
Captain Unattached.

Army and Navy Club, August 23.

We print elsewhere a letter from Captain Grover as to the fate of Colonel Stoddart and Captain Conolly. There seems to be, if not a reasonable doubt, at least a glimmering ray of hope that these brave men and faithful soldiers may not have been murdered by the Ameer of Bokhara. The evidence is by no means conclusive, and as while there is hope there may be life, it will, we must say, be most discreditable to our national character if the doubt be not cleared up. Five hundred pounds are sufficient to defray the cost of an expedition to ascertain their fate; and we do most earnestly call on all who sympathise with Captain Grover to aid him with their money in so afflicting a case.—*Editor Morning Herald.*

THE MURDERS IN BOKHARA.

To the Editor of the Times.

SIR,

We are accustomed in proof of our greatness to say, "that the sun never sets on the British dominions;" but this will in future be but an empty boast if we allow the foreigner to point to Bokhara, and say that the sun *has* set on the prestige of the British name.

The answer returned the other night by Sir R. Peel to the demand for retributive justice on the murderers of Captain Stoddart and Colonel Conolly was characterised by any thing but that decisive tone which the nation has a right to demand. Such coolness was not exhibited by Lord Chatham at the recital of British wrongs in Spanish America. Such an answer would not have been returned by Pitt, nor, I do think, by our own Wellington.

Has the glory of England departed? Is a British subject on a foreign shore no longer to be confident that the whole power of our empire will be exerted in his defence? Has miserable party spirit extinguished that stern feeling of nationality which even Cromwell displayed when he said that "he would make the British name as respected abroad as was ever that of ancient Rome?"

To judge the nation by the acts of the present feeble Ministry, we should be compelled to answer these questions with a melancholy affirmative.

But, Sir, though we have a "do-nothing" Ministry, let us not have a "do-nothing" character as a nation. Let us rouse ourselves, and shew that we are still the Britons of the "olden time." Let us once more shew the spirit of our fathers in the "days of yore." Let an army be immediately marched to punish the barbarous Ameer in his own capital. The ends of justice will be answered by hanging him before his palace gates. This might be done by forty thousand men from India in four months.

"And if our faithless Ministers have no funds in the present state of our finances, let the nation come forward, for it is a national object. A blow struck in Central Asia once more will complete the proof that there is no corner in the globe too remote for the arm of British power to reach. Let subscriptions be opened in every town in Great Britain to defray the expenses of the expedition. There is not an officer nor private in the united service who will grudge a day's pay for such a purpose; and amongst civilians, though it has become very fashionable to express great sympathy for the barbarians who

slaughter our countrymen; to be more tender over the murderers than the murdered, and the widows and orphans, yet I do think that there is sufficient sound English feeling left in the country, to bid defiance to the croakings of liberalism run to seed, and raise the subscription list to such an amount, as will not only inflict summary justice in this instance, but strike such terror into the people of Central Asia, as shall render it safe for the future exploration of our countrymen.

The cause is one not only of nationality but civilisation, and as such, perhaps, you will give these hints a place in your paper.

I am, &c.

A Naval Officer.

P. S.—I beg to say that I have not the slightest connexion with the murdered officer, but write with the indignant feelings that I trust animate every Englishman.

COLONEL STODDART AND CAPTAIN CONOLLY.

To the Editor of the Morning Herald.

Sir,

I received yesterday a letter from the celebrated missionary, Dr. Joseph Wolff, dated Bruges, August 27. As he is, I believe, the only person in England who has ever been at Bokhara, his opinion on the *rumoured* murder of the above distinguished officers may be interesting to the public; and I, therefore, send you the following extracts:—

"I read the statement of Muhammed Saleh in the papers a few days ago, and I confess that I doubt more than ever the truth of the report, that Colonel Stoddart and Captain Conolly have been put to death at Bokhara. If such an event has taken place in the city of Bokhara, containing a population of 280,000 inhabitants, he would not have heard that story of their heads having been cut off from one of the executioners alone, but by the loud expression of indignation of thousands of the inhabitants; but it appears from the report of Saleh Muhammed that it was *one of the executioners* who made him acquainted with the history.

"The Mullahs of Bokhara themselves told me, that if the Ameer Almoomeneen (that is the title of the prince) suspects a person, he either has him poisoned secretly at a distance from Bokhara, or strangled, for *they never cut off heads with a knife.*

"Besides these considerations, allow me to give you the following account of my journey to Bokhara in 1831:—

"When I arrived the second time at Teheran, in July 1831 (I was there previously in 1825), I called on my old friend, Khosrow Khan, to whom I had been introduced in 1825, by Sir Henry Willock and Sir John M'Neile. Khosrow Khan sent immediately for a Persian merchant, who was well acquainted with the state of Bokhara, from whence he had just arrived, and the following dialogue took place between us, in presence of Khosrow Khan:—

"The merchant having been informed of my intention of proceeding to Bokhara, turned to me, and said, 'Thou canst not go.' 'Why?' 'As soon as you arrive

at Khorassaun, the Toorkomans, who are cursed Sunnées, and therefore invade Khorassaun to make slaves of the inhabitants, who are good sheahs, will certainly make a slave of you; and if you were to reach Karakol, the governor would receive you in the kindest manner, and then give secret instructions to have you drowned in the Ammoo (Oxus); but the greatest misfortune would be to arrive at Bokhara, for Moorcroft, Guthrie, and Trebeck Sahib, after they had given thousands of rupees to Emeer Behadur, have been put to death openly at Bokhara, by his express orders.' I, however, undaunted, proceeded to Bokhara. It is true, I was made a slave in Khorassaun, but not by the Toorkomans, but by the banditti of Muhammed Izhak, khan of Torbad Hydarea. The fact, however, of my being an English subject was not only the cause of my own liberation, but of all the sheah slaves of Torbad, which, indeed, is a regular slave-market, and where hundreds were sold every year.

* * * * * *

"On my arrival at Mushed, the capital of Khorassaun, the sheah merchants and mullahs again assured me that Moorcroft, Guthrie, and Trebeck, had been publicly put to death at Bokhara. I remained a considerable time in the desert of Sarakhs, and the wild sons of the desert treated me with the greatest respect.

"I then proceeded from Sarakhs with *one single* Toorkoman, and reached Bokhara in safety notwithstanding the prediction of the merchant of Teheran. On my arrival at Bokhara, I learnt that neither Moorcroft, Guthrie, nor Trebeck, had been put to death at Bokhara. Moorcroft died at Ankhoj, not within the dominions of the King of Bokhara; he died of fever. Guthrie and

Trebeck died at Mazaur. * * * Now, mark! A few days after my arrival, the Mullahs of Bokhara went in a body to the Emeer, and said, 'Oh, Highness! Joseph Wolff, the Englishman, who has arrived here, has informed your vizier with frankness, that the Persians had told him that we had put to death Moorcroft, Guthrie, and Trebeck. His report confirms what we have heard from others, that the rascally sheah have given to the people of Bokhara the name of 'murderers of *guests*,' who are considered sacred by us. We must, therefore, treat Joseph Wolff, and every English traveller after him, with the highest regard and respect, and give him money if he wants it, in order that he may have a real statement of our dispositions towards guests.' The Emeer replied, 'By my head! Joseph Wolff must be treated well, and he will soon be convinced that Guzil Bash are liars.' And well treated I was; and you know that my passport from the Emeer is in the possession of my boy at Rugby. I was treated well in the kingdom of Bokhara, and so was Lieutenant, afterwards Sir A. Burnes.

"It is true, that the expedition to Affghanistan may have caused a change of sentiments towards the English, but this would only lead to a detention and strict surveillance of Colonel Stoddart and Captain Conolly, not to a violent murder of them; and if they had been murdered, *why has it never been confirmed by the Chekarpore merchants at Teheran and the Jews at Mushed?* The merchants in the caravanserai of Chekarpore at Bokhara have continual intercourse with the Chekarpore merchants at Teheran, and those Chekarpore merchants of Bokhara, jealous as they are of English travellers, certainly would have noised it abroad if such a deed had been perpetrated at Bokhara.

" I also forgot to add, that whilst I was at Bokhara, well-treated letters arrived from the Jews of Mushed, stating that it had been currently reported at Mushed and Ispahan, that *I had been put to death* by order of the Emeer.

" Now, having given my reasons for disbelieving Saleh Muhammed, *alias* Akhoondzadeh's account, I repeat again my willingness to start for Bokhara, if all can be arranged for my departure by the 1st October."

Thus far Dr. Wolff; and I will merely add a wish, that you may find room in your widely circulated journal for this long statement, and I have the honour to be your obedient servant,

JOHN GROVER,
Captain Unattached.

Army and Navy Club,
August 30.

P.S.—About a twelvemonth after Colonel Stoddart's arrival at Bokhara an account reached England that he had been put to death. This was believed by many. I doubted it. Some time after, this question was put to rest by the receipt of a letter from Colonel Stoddart, in which he desired his friends *not to believe any rumours of his death that may be circulated.* In fact, he was taken into high favour by the Emeer.

J. G.

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Johnson, Robert	1	1	0
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L. M. H.	1	0	0
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Lady, a	0	10	0
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Morse, Miss E.	5	0	0
Mortimer, Thomas Hill....	1	0	0
Murchison, R. J., Pres. Rl. Geo. Soc.....	5	0	0
Mylne, William C.....	1	1	0
Napier, Lady	1	0	0
Napier, Lieut.-Col. Edward	1	0	0
Napier, Capt. R.N.....	1	0	0
Newton, William.....	0	10	6
Nisbett, Henry	1	1	0
Officer's Sister, an	0	10	0
Oldham, Thomas.....	1	1	0
P. (per A. B.)	1	0	0
Paget, the Lady Augusta ..	1	0	0
Palmer, G. H.....	1	1	0
Palmer, H. R.....	1	0	0
Partridge, Miss	5	0	0
Pasley, Maj.-Gen	2	2	0
Patteson, Mrs., Cringleton	1	0	0
Patteson, Rev. W. F.....	1	0	0
Patteson, Miss.....	2	0	0
Penley, Major George.....	1	0	0
Phillips, Rev. Howells, M.A.	1	1	0
Pike, Thomas	1	0	0
Potter, William	1	0	0
Preston, Isaac, jun.	1	1	0
Provis, W. A.	5	0	0
Purssford, J.	1	0	0
Quilter, Miss S. A.....	0	10	0
Railton, William	3	3	0
Raper, Lieut. R.N.....	1	0	0
Readon, G.	0	2	6
Record, Editor of the.....	1	10	0
Reynolds, Miss	0	5	0
Rickman, W. C.....	1	0	0
Ripon, the Bishop of	5	0	0
Robertson, Miss	5	0	0
Robinson, Rev. David	2	0	0
Roffey, Mrs.	1	0	0
S. H. V.	0	4	0
Sandwith, Major.-Gen.....	2	0	0
Sandwith, Col. B.	1	1	0
Sandwith, Mrs. B.....	1	1	0
Scotch Friend of Dr. Wolff	20	0	0
Seymour, Miss, Bristol	0	10	0
Sibley, Robert	1	1	0
Simpson, James	3	3	0
Shropshire, a few Friends in	3	11	0
Singleton, the Lady Mary..	1	0	0
Singleton, James.....	2	0	0
Skinner, Miss Mary E.	0	10	0
Skrine, H.	5	0	0
Smith, Richard.....	1	0	0
Southey, T.	3	3	0
Spanish Bondholder	0	2	6
Sparrow, the Lady Olivia ..	10	0	0
Stedman, Richard	0	10	0
"Stormer of Ghuznee and Khelat"	1	0	0
Storr, John	5	0	0
Stuart, Capt. C., Gren. Gds.	5	0	0
Stuart, Mrs. C.....	1	0	0
Sufferer by the Cabul disasters.....	2	2	6
Summer, Richard	4	4	0
Taylor, Major-Gen. H. G. A.	1	0	0
Taylor, John	1	1	0
Teed, Mrs.....	1	1	0
Tennent, Richard Dillon ..	1	0	0
Thompson, Maj.-Gen. Harry	1	0	0
Thompson, —, Conduit St..	1	0	0
Tolver, Samuel.....	1	1	0
Tonna, L. H. J.....	1	0	0
Towns, W. C.	5	0	0
Traver, H.....	0	10	0
Trench, Lieut. F.C. 66th Reg.	1	0	0
Turnbull, George.....	2	2	0
Vigne, G. J.....	5	0	0
Vogan, Mrs.....	1	0	0
W. F. Clapham	0	10	0
W. N.	1	0	0
Wade, Major C. B. 13th Reg.	1	0	0
Wake, Miss, Brighton	20	0	0
Wake, Miss Eliza	1	0	0
Walker, James, F.R.S.	20	0	0
Walker, Lieut. Bethune J...	5	0	0
Webster, John	1	0	0
Webster, Rev. Hill.....	1	0	0
Westminster, the Marquess of	20	0	0
Whitmore, Lady	1	0	0
Whitworth, Joseph.....	1	1	0
Wichsteed, Thomas.....	5	5	0
Wilson, Lieut. R.N.	1	0	0
Wingfield, Col. the Hon. E.	1	0	0
Woodford, Major-Gen. Sir J.	5	0	0
Wodehouse, the Misses	1	0	0
Wodehouse, Miss A.	1	0	0
Wright, Major T.	2	0	0
Young Irishwoman.....	1	0	0

Collected by Francis Stevens, Esq., Her Majesty's Consul at Trebizonde, for the expenses of Dr. Wolff's journey from that city to Erzeroom.

	Piastres.
Le Chevalier de Ghersi, Russian Consul	1000
F. Stevens, Esq.	800
Monsieur de Clairambault, French Consul	400
J. H. Charnaud, Esq., Frederick Charnaud, British Merchants	800
F. Casolani, M. Dand, R. Casolani	300
W. P. Dickson	200
R. W. Stevens, Esq.	300
G. Marcopoly	300
Monsieur Outrey	200
The Rev. William Johnston	50
The Rev. E. Bliss	50
Total collected piastres	4400

Subscriptions from India per Agra Bank.

	Rupees.	
Sleeman, Colonel	200	
Young, Colonel	50	
	250	£22 13 2

Per Bank of Western India.

	Rupees.	
Sandys, Major	50	
Arrow, Lieutenant W. G.	10	
	60	5 7 6
Total received from India		£28 0 8

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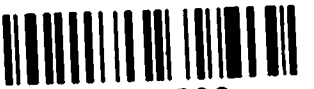
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